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SCHAUFFLER, R. H.
Plays for American holidays.

West Bend Community Memorial Library
West Bend, Wisconsin

PLAYS FOR OUR AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

PLAYS FOR OUR AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

Compiled and edited by ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER and A. P. SANFORD.

1. PLAYS FOR CHRISTMAS AND OTHER HIGH DAYS: including Christmas, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter and Halloween.

2. PLAYS FOR FESTIVALS: including New Year's Day, Twelfth Night, Arbor Day, April Fool's Day, May Day, Thanksgiving Day and Forefathers' Day.

3. PLAYS FOR PATRIOTIC DAYS: including Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Flag Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thomas Jefferson Day and Armistice Day.

4. PLAYS FOR SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS: including Mother's Day, Children's Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Health Week, Music Week, Book Week and Red Cross Week.

PLAYS FOR OUR AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

Plays for Festivals:

Including New Year's Day, Twelfth Night, Arbor Day, April Fool's Day, May Day, Thanksgiving Day, Forefathers' Day

* *

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER

AND

A. P. SANFORD

WEST BEND PUBLIC LIBRARY

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INTRODUCTION

"Why didn't you put more plays into your series *Our American Holidays?*"

The plaintiff was my friend Miss Eugenia Krauss, Librarian of the Epiphany Branch of the New York Public Library. I pleaded lack of space.

"Then why not bring out some supplementary volumes devoted entirely to drama?"

She drew an arresting picture of the situation in 23rd Street.

"Before each holiday and special celebration we are swamped with clients who clamor for appropriate plays. They must be not too long and not too hackneyed. They must be effective, amusing, interesting, with economical costuming and setting, and fairly easy to act. We hate to do it; but we have to send most of these people away empty-handed. We simply don't know where to turn for material. And the same thing happens at the other branches."

Now, any request from librarians always has my respectful consideration, because librarians are so often right. They are in a position to know what holes in literature need filling up. In Pittsburgh, years ago, a five-minute talk with two of them resulted in the publication of a book of travel and the eleven volumes of *Our American Holidays.* I owe them far more in the way of encouragement, stimulus and practical suggestion than can ever be repaid by the dedication of "The Poetry Cure," by making anthologies to save them steps, or by that essay in appreciation, "The Creative Librarian," on which I have been at work for a decade or so, and mean to bring out some year in "The Atlantic Monthly."

When the ground was surveyed, Miss Krauss proved to

be right. In the existing collections of holiday literature there was found to be a marked shortage of the sort of drama needed by amateurs. For a few occasions like Jefferson's Birthday, and certain of the "Weeks," there seemed to be almost nothing of the kind in print. A good many tired teachers, librarians and settlement workers were, in desperation, turning out emergency plays after their regular work was done.

It is hoped that these volumes may lighten their labors. To meet the direst need, nine plays were specially written for this series. The other selections are almost as fresh; for the great majority of them have been put on paper within the last three years.

A few are by distinguished foreigners. The fact that the writers of the rest hail from all parts of the United States gives these books a quality representatively American. An effort has been made to meet, in every division, the requirements of all ages in schools, colleges, dramatic clubs and other organizations.

The series provides a thing increasingly needed in modern life,—re-creation through laughter. And it has an even more useful aim. It was undertaken in sympathy with the new, concrete type of character-education which is rapidly supplanting the abstract method of obvious didacticism. The latter coldly laid down the law "line upon line and precept upon precept." It sought to improve personality by a frontal barrage of crude moralizing. These volumes would lend practical support to the more scientific method of our own day. This works concretely, yet with far more subtle effectiveness, through the action and passion, the example and the indirect suggestion of the stage. Already it has shown striking results in building better citizens of the home, the school, the college, the town, the nation and the world.

R. H. S.

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BABY NEW YEAR *

By

RUTH ARKWRIGHT

* Used by courtesy of author and publisher, Wells Gardner-Darton & Co., Ltd., 3 Paternoster Bldg., 44 Victoria Street, S. W., London, England.

CHARACTERS

Old Year
Baby New Year
Father Christmas

The Scene is laid in a snowy country.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

BABY NEW YEAR

First hang a large sheet at the back of the stage, as straight and tight as possible. Then over the upper half of it neatly pin dark blue art muslin, covered with tiny stars of silver paper. Next cut out in brown paper a church with a spire (about twelve inches high) a cottage or two, some trees, etc., and pin them in a horizontal line, where the sky and the white sheet join. The buildings should have white paper pasted onto the roofs to give the appearance of snow.

Now put a small, real fir-tree at one side, standing in a pot, and opposite to it a few rustic sticks nailed together to form an open fence. There should be sprays of ivy climbing up the railings, and a white sheet upon the floor. Then, if you can lay little strips of cotton wool along the branches of the tree and on the fence, you will have a realistic winter scene.

Enter NEW YEAR, *dressed in white tunic and hose, white cloak lined with color, and a gold crown with the numerals of the new year upon it. He discovers the* OLD YEAR *sitting on a rock weeping, clad in a Grecian dress of gray, and also wearing a crown inscribed with the numerals of the departing year.*

NEW YEAR.

Why, there's a lady crying! Oh, I say!
It makes me feel quite queer. Pray, lady, pray
Do not be sad! What can the matter be?

OLD YEAR [*rising and turning*].

Do not be sad? How can I help it, child?
You with your infant face, and eyes so mild,
With smiling lips, and happiness expressed

Through every part! How can you understand
Sadness at all?
It is because I go,
Yea, am already gone, and come no more!
And more than that, my throne will now be filled
By a New Year. A glad New Year, indeed!
He won't be glad for long—but, let me see!
Why—who are you? What's this upon your brow?
One-nine-two-nine! You are his very self.
The New Year come to take away my place.

NEW YEAR.

Am I? I hardly yet know what I am,
For I have only just come through that door.
I know not where to go, so turn to you.
Please help me now, and teach me what to do!

OLD YEAR.

Poor little helpless thing! Of course I will!
[*They embrace.*]
Though how to teach a little boy like this
To fit his back to bear the weight of years
Is more than I can think!
You must be bright
Whatever happens; but such trying things
As you would never dream of come to pass.

NEW YEAR.

Oh, dear! What sort of things!

OLD YEAR [*pointing*].

Well, presently,
You'll see the buds break on these leafless boughs,
And flowers spring. You'll hear the birds
Singing their sweet songs, through the balmy air.
You'll see green fields, full of soft woolly lambs.

NEW YEAR.

I shall like that!

OLD YEAR. Yes, and then harvest fields,
Turning to golden seas, with rippling waves
Of glory, as the wind blows over them.

NEW YEAR.
Why, it will be all fun—and you are sad?
OLD YEAR.
Oh! I've not told you half!
[*Enter* FATHER CHRISTMAS, *carrying a sack.*]
FATHER CHRISTMAS. Nor will you, please!
NEW YEAR [*running to him*].
Who is this dear old man?
OLD YEAR. Why, don't you know?
That's Father Christmas, and he's got to go,
For Christmas now is past, like the old year,
And isn't that enough to draw a tear?
FATHER CHRISTMAS [*sits down on stone facing the audience*].
Tears! Don't believe her! Here, you spratling, come!
Stand by my knees, and listen to my words!
Years pass away and Christmases go by—
Days, hours, and minutes—come—are here—and fly
But that's no reason for a mournful tone!
Some of our best things are our memories.
[*He gets up and goes to the* OLD YEAR, *holding her hand.*]
And you and I, Old Year, must rather smile—
Than weep—
That is, if we can feel
That we have given happy thoughts to those
Who store them up within their grateful hearts
And keep this ever-springing Well of Life
To share with others.
When they think of us
If then they smile—our task is bravely done.
[*He turns to the* NEW YEAR *again.*]
Come, Baby New Year, come, and let me see
Of what you're made!
Clear eyes—strong limbs—
A crop of Saxon hair—a ruddy look
Of open-air enjoyment.

Well! I'm glad!
You promise well—kiss your old friend!
[NEW YEAR *runs and kisses them both.*]
Keep a brave heart—be true and very kind,
And you will leave inspiring thoughts behind.
[*They all sing*]:

As the moments pass away,
Out into the night,
Keep your faces always turned,
Turned towards the light.

Keep your eyes upon the goal,
Traveling along;
Give a hand to weary friends,
Cheer the road with song.

So when you too pass away
Through the shadowed door,
Grateful love will cling to you,
Always, evermore.

Grateful memories and sweet,
Of that cheering song;
Of that steadfast, helping hand,
All the journey long.

[*Exit* FATHER CHRISTMAS *and* OLD YEAR, *kissing "good-by" as they go.* NEW YEAR *finds the sack in the middle of the stage and calls aloud.*]

NEW YEAR.

Hi! Father Christmas, Hi! Old Year, what's this?
[*Reënter* FATHER CHRISTMAS *and* OLD YEAR.]

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

Dear me! It's my last bag of Christmas gifts!
Will you just hand them round?

NEW YEAR. Oh! please, I can't,
All by myself! Please help me, and you too!

I cannot even read, and it won't do
To give the parcels wrong.

FATHER CHRISTMAS AND OLD YEAR [*together*].
We'll help, we will!
There's one more jolly time before us still!
But first we'll ask you all to give a cheer
For happy Old and happy "glad New Year."

[*If there is no necessity to introduce the distribution of gifts, the little episode will end with the song,* ***"As the Moments."***]

[CURTAIN]

THE CAVE OF THE FATES *

By

VIRGINIA OLCOTT

* Courtesy of Virginia Olcott.

CHARACTERS

MAID MARGARET
DAME ANNA
FIRST FATE
SECOND FATE
THIRD FATE
LITTLE NEW YEAR

COSTUMES

THREE FATES: First Sister in Greek robes of white. Second Sister in robes of shaded gray and lavender. Third Sister in black draperies, a gray-black veil hides her face.

DAME ANNA: Gray peasant dress—white apron, kerchief, and high white coif. Red stockings.

MAID MARGARET: Short dull-red skirt, white chemisette. Blue over-jacket, laced loosely in front. Blue wool stockings. White apron and coif.

In Act II she wears a hooded cape and carries a staff and lantern.

LITTLE NEW YEAR: Short white slip. Long white stockings. He is covered with bells and spangles. Bits of frosted cotton lie like snowflakes on his hair. Tiny bells fastened with thread are attached to his hair.

THE CAVE OF THE FATES

ACT I

THE HOME

SCENE I. *The kitchen in the cottage of* DAME ANNA. *At the center is an open grate with a burning log upon it. A plain high-back settle, near by, in which is seated* DAME ANNA. *She is a bent old woman in a gray peasant dress and crossed kerchief. Her eyes are closed and her face is sad and worn. Near her is a spinning wheel and she holds, listlessly in her lap, the distaff. By the table* MAID MARGARET *is busy preparing the evening meal. As the curtain rises she places the single candle in the center, and looks proudly at her work. There is an air of holiday about the simple repast—a sprig of green herb decorates each place and two little cakes are a special treat beside the daily dish of porridge.*

MAID MARGARET [*lightly kissing the brow of the old woman*]. The sup is ready, Grandame.

DAME ANNA [*listlessly, without moving*]. 'Tis weary I am, little one, eat you alone, and leave me to my dreams.

MAID MARGARET. Alack, are they come again, those evil thoughts? So happy we have been this last fortnight that I thought the charm of the Wise Woman had wrought its magic! [*Coaxing.*] See, dear Grandame, 'tis New Year's Eve and I have made holiday. Besides our porridge we have each a sweet-cake—a—real—sweet-cake! And Father Andrew gave me this morning some herbs which grew beside the blessed Church. [*Taking her hands.*] Come, come, and see! [DAME ANNA *slowly goes to the table, and*

draws the girl to her side when she sees her pretty work.]

DAME ANNA [*lovingly*]. You are a good child to me, little maid, 'tis like a sunbeam you are with all your bright ways.

MAID MARGARET [*delighted*]. It pleases you? [*Simply.*] 'Tis these herbs that make all so fair; Father Andrew blessed them when he plucked them for me. And these little sweet-cakes [*holding one in each hand, proudly*], it was my birth-night pence that bought these for us!

DAME ANNA. You must rule more wisely that kind little heart. Some day you will need all the pence that our humble home can spare. Soon you may be left alone with none to look to your comfort.

MAID MARGARET [*anxiously*]. Alack, 'tis sick you are that you talk so wild! Dear Grandame, tell me what it is that ails you?

DAME ANNA [*soothingly*]. 'Tis no ailment, but my dreams this night have told me that my days are fast ending. 'Tis glad I am, for I am weary of waiting for this long war to be over.

MAID MARGARET [*with passion*]. Your dreams are false! False and bitter, Grandame! 'Tis a New Year promise, and he is coming to us!

DAME ANNA [*sighing and going back to the fire*]. No, little one, he will never return. Slain on the field of battle, mayhap he lies. I have lost my grandson and you your brother! 'Tis his fate that took him from us.

MAID MARGARET [*resolutely*]. I believe it not!

DAME ANNA. 'Tis the courage of youth you have. 'Tis a wondrous gift—the Fates are kind as well as pitiless.

MAID MARGARET [*with hope*]. And 'tis a kind Fate that will bring him to us.

DAME ANNA [*solemnly*]. Naught can change the Fates that come to us. From our birth-night they sit and make our destiny. No human skill or wisdom can change their will. [*She sits listlessly before the fire, and gazes into the flames, with* MAID MARGARET *on the little stool at her feet.*

Her looks are thoughtful and grave. The room is still. Slowly DAME ANNA *closes her eyes, and falls into a light sleep.*]

MAID MARGARET [*softly*]. Grandame! [*Gently touching her hand.*] Asleep she is! May her dreams be kind to her this New Year's Eve! [*Wearily.*] 'Tis hard to be young with a sorrow on the heart, but, alack! 'tis harder to be aged and in grief! [*Sweetly.*] Though I love him much, dear Bertram, 'tis for *her* sake mostly that I wish him home again. [*Pause. She speaks resolutely.*] He must come or she will die of grieving. Alack, what shall I do, a simple maid without strength or wisdom? [*She stands, her voice is low but firm.*] I will—go—to—the Fates—and tell them—about Grandame. 'Tis only they who can bring him back. They will listen, for they are good. [*She turns to the hearth and takes her brown-hooded cloak from the peg. Then crossing to the table, she picks up a sprig of green herb and hides it in her bodice. She speaks softly.*] I know not which path to take. Maybe these dear leaves will lead me across the marshlands to their dwelling, for blessed they were by Father Andrew, and they can do naught but good. [*She pauses by the open door and gazes tenderly at* DAME ANNA.] Good even, dear Grandame! But a little time I shall be away. The Fates will give you joy this New Year's Day!

[CURTAIN]

ACT II

THE CAVE

SCENE II. *The Cave of the* FATES. *As the curtain rises all is still. The Cave is lighted only by a fagot fire, which burns near the figures of the* THREE FATES, *who sit silent in the center-back of the Cave. All is gloom elsewhere. Quietly the* FATES *do their tasks. The*

FIRST FATE *happily spins the Tread of Human Life. The* SECOND FATE *tests it between her thumb and finger, making it strong or weak, giving weal or woe. The* THIRD FATE, *with her huge scissors, cuts the Thread and ends the course of Life.*

FIRST FATE [*brightly singing*].

Thread of Life—
Twirl, Thread, twirl,
No wish, no will,
Enter the World.

SECOND FATE [*tenderly singing*].

Thread of Life—
Future years—
Bloom and fade,
Smiles and tears.

THIRD FATE [*mournfully singing*].

Thread of Life,
Fall, Thread, fall!
Rest at last
Silence all.

FIRST FATE [*without pausing in her work*]. Sister, a child is born. This is the New Year; I pray you make her gift of life a happy one.

SECOND FATE [*softly taking the Thread in her fingers*].

Thread of Life,
Beautiful be,
Smiles, Joys,
Ever with thee.

[*Holding the Thread to the* THIRD FATE, *who puts it by.*]

THIRD FATE. I will not work to-night. The coming year must bring happiness to all.

FIRST FATE. Listen, there is some one groping in the dark passage.

SECOND FATE. Throw on some fagots, Sister, and give more light.

THIRD FATE. 'Tis a long, hard road for a child's feet to travel. [*Enter* MAID MARGARET. *She carries a lantern and a pilgrim's staff. Her cloak is torn and her face is white and spent.*]

MAID MARGARET [*curtseying timidly*]. I have come a weary way. The paths were rough and filled with brambles. I pray you pardon my ill attire. [*Holds out her tattered cloak.*]

FIRST FATE. Come hither, that I may look on you. It was not many years ago since your Thread of Life was spun on yonder Wheel. [MAID MARGARET *crosses and kneels before her with her hood unclasped.*] Let me look close and see what my Sister has done to you.

SECOND FATE [*very gently*]. I have dealt kindly with her. There have been both smiles and shadows in her life.

FIRST FATE. But alack! The smiles lie far back and now a dark shadow is in her eyes! [*To* MAID MARGARET.] Tell me, Child, what is your sorrow?

MAID MARGARET [*breathless*]. 'Tis Grandame—[*The* FATES *watch her intently.*] and—I—came—to ask—you—to help—her.

THIRD FATE [*speaking for the first time*]. What is her age?

MAID MARGARET [*turning to her in happiness*]. *You* will help? [*Quickly.*] Listen, I will tell you.

SECOND FATE [*taking her hand and drawing her away*]. Seek not my Sister's aid—her gentle hand brings death—alone— [MAID MARGARET *shrinks away in terror.*] No, fear not. *That* is happiness to some. Tell *me* your story.

MAID MARGARET [*very simply*]. 'Tis for Grandame that I came. My brother is gone to the war—for three long years he has been away—and her heart is sad longing for him. 'Tis all she has, just Bertram and me! But now he is gone and she fears him slain in the battles. Ah, dear Fates, bring him back to her.

SECOND FATE [*regretfully*]. I do not often change one's destiny. It is valiant to die on the field of battle. The cottager's grandson deserves such honor. [*To the* FIRST FATE.] That was my decree twenty years agone when you gave his Thread of Life into my hands. [*To* MAID MARGARET.] Ask me not to change his destiny, my child.

MAID MARGARET [*in despair*]. But she will die, dear Grandame, if he come not back. [*Beseechingly.*] Oh, Fates, be generous, give her back her grandson!

FIRST FATE [*to the others*]. The child does not ask to have her own life changed; 'tis for another that she begs.

SECOND FATE [*thoughtfully—aside*]. It must have been of pure gold that you spun *her* Life Thread. Strong and good must be her heart. Shall I try her, Sister?

FIRST FATE. Whatever you ask of her, she will be ready for the task. She will not be found wanting, I know—

SECOND FATE [*turning and touching the bowed head*]. Gold could not change his fate, nor wisdom, nor deeds of bravery—but—your grief and thought for another than yourself have turned my will. Listen well—your brother may return to your cottage if you will serve us seven years.

MAID MARGARET [*springing up joyfully*]. Gladly I will serve you forever! Give me my work, kind Fate, that I may begin.

FIRST FATE. Oil my wheel.

SECOND FATE. Turn my Flax.

THIRD FATE. Hold my Shears.

MAID MARGARET [*dropping her cloak to the ground in her haste*]. Such easy tasks! [*Kneeling by the Wheel.*] Dear Wheel, you will glisten like the sunshine when my work is done!

FIRST FATE. Wait! If you stay with us for seven years you can never see your Grandame again.

MAID MARGARET [*simply, with cheer*]. If I stay with you, Grandame will have her heart's desire.

SECOND FATE. Wait! If you stay with us seven years you must lose your friends and playmates.

MAID MARGARET [*bravely*]. *You* are my friends, I shall want no others. No work will be too hard, nor the years too long to show my gratitude.

SECOND FATE [*to the others*]. I spoke the truth. Her heart is strong and pure. She has been tried and has not failed. The world needs her. It would be wrong to keep her with us even for seven years. [*In the distance a bell strikes twelve times.*]

FIRST FATE [*brightly*]. The New Year is born. Listen! Hear him dancing through the passage. [*Suddenly into the gloom comes dancing the little* NEW YEAR. *He is robed in sparkling white, and covered with tinkling bells. All his movements are light and airy and his voice is filled with laughter.*]

NEW YEAR. Here I am! All over the universe I have been in the twinkling of a second. Is there a message, O Destinies, to carry back to the world?

FIRST FATE. There *is* a message.

SECOND FATE. It is before you.

THIRD FATE. It is the Child!

NEW YEAR [*running brightly to* MAID MARGARET]. This is a fair message to take to some waiting home. [*Takes her hand.*] Come, beautiful gift, let the New Year take you to the World.

MAID MARGARET [*drawing back timidly*]. You are mistaken, I—am—not—the message. I—am their—servant!

SECOND FATE. Servant no longer, little maid, we did but try your heart, and found it brave and good. Go with our messenger and find your happiness on New Year's Day. [*The* FATES *begin their work once more, as the little* NEW YEAR *leads* MAID MARGARET *from the Cave.*]

[CURTAIN]

WHEN THE HORNS BLOW *

(Written for "*Plays for All the Holidays*")

A COMEDY SKETCH IN ONE ACT

By

ETHEL VAN DER VEER

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CHARACTERS

JULIAN BROOKS, *an artist*
MARY LEIGH, *a fashion-artist*
KAY NORTON, who lives on parties
JANE BOLLING, *a "home" girl*
LOLA CORTEZ, *an opera singer*
MAUDE PROUTY, *a beautiful model*
MRS. WELLINGTON G. THROCKMORTON

1 M—6 W

NOTE: A versatile protean could play all of the girl parts except Mrs. Throckmorton—or the parts could be divided between two women, reducing the cast to 1 M, 2 W.

WHEN THE HORNS BLOW

SCENE: *The Studio of* JULIAN BROOKS. *The usual studio furnishings. Blank wall up center behind the easel, on which is a drawing-board with paper fastened on with three thumbtacks and, in the upper left corner, by a dagger which shows beyond the corner of the board, which is facing up left. Window up left, with holly wreath or evergreens. Dais right of easel, with armchair. Up left, near window, and out of the way of traffic, are two small chairs. Doors, R. and L. Entrance, R., doorway on left has hangings instead of door. Couch down left, below doorway, with folding screen partly concealing it. Table and chairs down right. Telephone on taboret or small table near easel. Because of the action, it is best not to clutter the stage with more furniture than is actually needed.*

JULIAN, *wearing a painter's smock, is standing before his easel, fiercely concentrating upon his sketch. His brows are puckered, and so intent is he upon his work of blocking out a scene in charcoal, that he does not observe when*

MARY LEIGH *enters, and remains oblivious of her presence.* MARY *comes in, R., and stands a moment holding the covered tray which she brings in, and regards* JULIAN *with a whimsical little smile. Then she sets down tray on table, down right, goes to couch, down left, draws the screen back a little, showing more of couch.* JULIAN *gives a few more swift strokes with his charcoal, stands back, looks at result, and excitedly dashes out of the door, R. He is heard pounding on door of studio across the hall.*

JULIAN [*off, calling*]. Oh, Mary! Mary Leigh! Come on over—I've got it!

MARY [*laughingly follows to door*]. Here I am, Julian. [JULIAN *returns.*] Been here some time.

JULIAN. No! And I never noticed—!

MARY. That isn't unusual, is it, Julian? I daresay you didn't notice me this afternoon, either.

JULIAN. Mary! You weren't here this afternoon.

MARY. Oh, you noticed that, did you?

JULIAN [*laughing*]. You little mouse! Never mind, look here— [*Drags her to the easel.*] Isn't that *it?* Isn't it?

MARY. Perfect. You'll get the prize with that picture, Julian. The *idea* is good.

JULIAN. It was *your* idea, Mary.

MARY. Well, I couldn't have worked it out. Did you get that other commission to-day?

JULIAN. Yes, thanks again to you, my little friend.

MARY. Oh, no. Your technique has improved, or you wouldn't have gotten it. Keep on, Julian, and you'll arrive before you know it.

JULIAN. Sometimes in the past few months I've thought I *had* arrived. But I don't seem to be any better off than I was a year ago.

MARY. Oh, yes, you are. A year ago you weren't earning your present income tax.

JULIAN [*going to table, down right*]. Income tax! Why, I never paid one.

MARY. You will this year. But you'd have had to borrow it if—

JULIAN. If I hadn't let you take care of it for me. Maybe you're right, Mary, but I'll say you know how to hold on to my money. [*Tries to peek under tray cover.*]

MARY. Haven't you had everything you needed? Listen, Julian, after all you've been through, if I'd let you have all you made this year, it would have gone to your head. You'd have moved to some more fashionable studio,

some nice bright girl would have had you on a leash, and you'd have forgotten all about little Mary, or got me mixed up with the one that had the lamb. [*She goes to the couch.*]

JULIAN. Oh, I say, Mary! Chuck it! *Me* forget the little girl I used to give a bottle to before she could talk?

MARY. There's a girl now, that you give bottles to, after she can no longer talk.

JULIAN. Kay Norton?

MARY [*sitting on the couch*]. Uh-huh! Kay's all right, but I think she's all set for the horns to blow. It's leap year, to-morrow.

JULIAN [*laughing*]. Come to think of it, Kay's already suggested that I take a bigger studio—

MARY. Down in the village? [*He laughs because she has guessed right.*] Converted stable, likely. There'd be more room for dancing.

JULIAN. Oh, come, Mary, you're getting too clever for a studio mouse. But I expect to be dancing to-night—when the horns blow. [*Removes his painter's smock.*]

MARY. You'd better take a rest first, then. You're fagged out—I can tell by your eyes. What'll you be to-morrow?

JULIAN. To-morrow? Well, to-morrow I may be married.

MARY [*very still for a moment, then*]. Not—not Kay?

JULIAN [*laughing*]. I—I really don't know.

MARY. Kay's got money—you wouldn't have to work.

JULIAN [*going down near her*]. But I want to work! It's just that it's time I married. Every one says I ought to marry—for my art's sake. And I daresay they're right. There's something lacking, otherwise., I felt that way all this afternoon. [*She rises and crosses to table.*]

MARY. But if there's no one—no one you simply can't live without—

JULIAN [*throwing smock on couch*]. There isn't—that's the interesting side of it. I've thought them all over—pros and cons. Lots of pros—lots of cons.

MARY. *Very* interesting. Why not make a list and give them numbers—like a raffle—and see whose number you pick out of the hat?

JULIAN. Mary! How can you be so flippant about marriage?

MARY. I couldn't—if I thought you were serious.

JULIAN. But I am! I tell you everybody's right. . . . Of course, Mary, if you don't want to be helpful— [*Peeks under tray cover again.*] Is there anything there that'll get cold?

MARY. No, it'll get hot—when you light the chafing-dish.

JULIAN. Oh! . . . Well, listen—that list you spoke of isn't such a bad idea. I mean, that way I needn't allow proximity to influence me.

MARY. I see. . . . Well, Julian, I'll miss you. [*Goes toward door, right.*]

JULIAN. Mary! Don't go! I couldn't get along without you—I— [*He stops, faltering.*]

MARY [*coming back; happily*]. Julian! You mean—

JULIAN. You're looking at the worst side of this. You know—I don't see why any girl would really want to marry me—

MARY. You don't have to—just leave that to the girl.

JULIAN. Well, of course, there might be one—and I might never suspect it. But that list would be just possible prospects for me to canvass—

MARY. You wouldn't have to go far—down the list, I mean. There's always some girl who's willing to marry any man.

JULIAN. Huh! Well, even so—I might not have to move—and you could be around just the same.

MARY. Not likely. But you won't miss me, if you marry Kay Norton. You won't be around home much yourself. Kay's on the go all the time. She says she crawls in one side of the bed and out the other, to give herself the general impression of a good night's rest.

JULIAN. Well—there's Jane Bolling—

MARY. For the other extreme. Jane's a good cook—she can make eleven kinds of hot cakes. You'll get fat with Jane—if your digestion holds out.

JULIAN. How about the lovely Lola Cortez, with her gorgeous voice?

MARY. A great operatic career is predicted for Lola. You'd become as famous as Patti's husband.

JULIAN [*thoughtfully*]. Perhaps it would be more inspiring for my work to have a quiet, statuesque beauty around.

MARY. Like Maude Prouty? She's something of a dumbbell, but she's the most beautiful model you ever had. If you didn't get inspiration, you could sit and look at her. [*The telephone rings.*]

JULIAN [*looking at the telephone*]. I suppose that's one of them, now. I—I had a date for to-night—with somebody—

MARY [*hopefully*]. It—it might have been a business engagement—

JULIAN [*going to the telephone*]. Huh! Not on New Year's Eve. [*As she starts again for the door.*] Don't go! I—I haven't any secrets from you. [*He takes the telephone, preparatory to answering it.* NOTE: *The telephone rings at brief intervals during the scene and until he answers it.*]

MARY [*dropping into chair by table*]. You might have *said* it was a business engagement— [*Suddenly bursting into tears.*] You might have *tried* to fool me. If only you thought I was *worth* being fooled—

JULIAN [*putting down telephone, going toward her*]. Why, Mary! Why, my dear— [*The telephone bell halts him and he goes back. Until he finally answers, he seesaws to and fro between* MARY *and the telephone.*]

MARY [*with tears in her voice*]. After all the years we've studied together and worked together— I don't

m-mean that m-much to you. You wouldn't even t-try to f-fool me.

JULIAN. But, Mary—!

MARY. Haven't we seen every old year out, and every new year in, ever since—

JULIAN. I know, dear. There, there! We did in Greensborough, yes—but here in New York—why, last year—let me think—I was out somewhere, dancing—

MARY [*drying her eyes*]. Last year I had a breakdown and went home to m-mother.

JULIAN. I remember, now. [*The telephone rings and he takes it up. To* MARY:] I say—maybe I can fix it about to-night—somehow. [*Into the telephone:*] Hello! . . . Oh, hel-lo! . . . Sorry, been working. 'Fraid I can't make it, after all. Some work to be got out in a hurry. . . . But really . . . if you put it that way . . . all right, I'll come . . . eleven o'clock, yes. [*He hangs up receiver.*] I say, Mary—why not come along?

MARY. Not a chance.

JULIAN. Kay wouldn't mind you. I think she rather expects to play me off against some other man. I say, why don't you come along and run off with the other duffer? There'll be a crowd, anyway. Better come.

MARY. In the second place—I've nothing to wear. Oh, I know, I design clothes for other women, but I've none for myself.

JULIAN. Poor little studio-mouse—that never gets any cheese, eh. But you surely have something—why, that thing you have on—

MARY. Not to-night, Julian. But if you're going, you're pretty well fagged now—you'd better take forty winks first.

JULIAN [*investigating the tray*]. Haven't time, have I? Umm! Hot tomales and *caramel custard!* When do we eat?

MARY [*replacing cover on tray*]. That was to have been our midnight supper—when the horns began to blow. . . . It doesn't matter, I'll have it for lunch to-morrow. Better

lie down and get your nap. I'll call you in plenty of time.

JULIAN [*going to the couch*]. Just as you say. You do take care of me, don't you, Mary.

MARY. Brain workers need plenty of sleep, and you need more than the average. [*She has followed him and gets the coverlet. He stretches at full length upon the couch, his head behind the screen. She throws the coverlet over him and then draws the screen so that it conceals him.*] Pleasant dreams! [MARY *goes toward door, R., hesitates near table, sees tray and gives a little choking sob, then hurries to door, stops to press light button on wall near door. Scene—black-out, as she goes out, R. A moment's pause. Then from behind the screen comes the sound of snoring; then the murmurings of a troubled sleep, inarticulate sounds of distress—not overdone—then quiet. Note—To be effective, the following dream-scenes should be played seriously—avoiding any suggestion of burlesque or buffoonery. When the lights go on again, only the space up center, around the easel, is lighted.* JULIAN *is seen in the same position in which he first was discovered. He wears his painter's smock.* KAY NORTON *enters from the left in a state of aggravated hurry. Seeing* JULIAN *at work, she throws up her hands in dismay.*]

KAY. For heaven's sake, Julian! For *heaven's sake!* Here it is ten o'clock in the morning and you're not dressed yet.

JULIAN. But, Kay dear, I—

KAY [*accusingly*]. You've been in bed—that's why! You went to bed when we got home this morning. A fine husband you are! And with my money paying for everything!

JULIAN. But, Kay—

KAY. Aren't you going to play in the finals against Helen Wills?

JULIAN. But, my dear—

KAY. And there's the dance at the Country Club—and bridge—

JULIAN. But I'm working—

KAY. And we've got tea and dinner and supper engagements—

JULIAN. Oh dear, I've got to have this sketch done—

KAY. Nonsense! Art is all very well as a hobby, but when you haven't time for it—

JULIAN. That's just it! I don't *get* time. And time is going by so *fast!* How do you think I'm going to make good—

KAY. You don't have to. Here's a check for a million dollars. Put on your bathing suit and come along. You can paint when you are an old man. [*She flounces off to the left.* JULIAN, *shaking his head, follows her off. Almost at once he returns and goes to easel. But it is seen that now he is an old man, bent and with white hair and a long white beard. His hand shakes as with palsy as he takes up his charcoal and tries to draw the sketch.*]

KAY [*from off left, in quavering voice*]. Hurry, Julian, hur-ry! [*She dances stiffly on to the sound of jazz. She wears white wig, carries tennis racket.*]

JULIAN. But, Kay—I've done nothing but hurry, for years and years—

KAY [*in aged voice*]. Come along, Julian!

JULIAN [*tearfully, unsteadily, as the very old might speak*]. I've been fifty years trying to get this sketch done before the horns blow. I expect Gabriel's horn will blow before—

KAY. No matter—you can finish it in heaven. [*She takes him by the wrist.*]

JULIAN [*as* KAY *drags him off, left*]. Oh, dear, if only I'd married Jane Bolling—she was such a home girl—

[*Scene—black-out. From behind the screen comes the sound of snoring. A slight pause, and when the lights come on again,* JULIAN *is seen as at first, wearing his smock, and once more a young man. He is earnestly working at his sketch.*]

JANE [*off, calling*]. Julian! Oh, Julian, come and help me—quick.

JULIAN [*petulantly*]. Wait a minute, Jane!

JANE [*off*]. I can't wait! The muffins will fall.

JULIAN. Drat the muffins! I must get this sketch done before the— [*Starts drawing rapidly.* JANE BOLLING *enters. She wears a cap and bungalow apron and wheels in a small table set for two, with platter heaped high with many kinds of biscuit.*]

JANE. Pity you couldn't give me a little help! Pity you couldn't come to breakfast! Here I've been up all night making eleven kinds of hot biscuit, and you won't even come and *eat* them. [*She whimpers.*]

JULIAN. Oh, all right, all right! Listen, Jane, I've told you so often that if I don't get this sketch done—

JANE [*getting small chairs from up left, placing them at table*]. I know, I know! You can't think of anything but your sketch—and when anything *important* comes up—and your itty wifie is in tr-rouble—! [*Sniffling, she sits at table.*]

JULIAN [*throwing down his crayon*]. Trouble! What now?

JANE [*on the verge of tears*]. I've a terrible confession —I—I hate to tell you.

JULIAN. Then don't!

JANE. I must, I must! You'll find out anyway. [*Buries her face in her hands.*]

JULIAN [*sits at table*]. All right! Allez-oop!

JANE. Oh, forgive me, husband, forgive me!

JULIAN [*looking about table suspiciously*]. You mean the biscuit?

JANE [*sobs and sniffles*]. Oh, worse! The nut-bread! The nut-bread for to-night! And I was so careful to follow the recipe—just as it came over the radio. But maybe it was the lard?

JULIAN [*shifting as if to rise*]. Now see here, Jane, you know I've got that appointment—

JANE [*ready to cry again*]. *Do* you think it was the lard?

JULIAN [*looking at his watch*]. I've only got an hour—

JANE. But it might have been the yeast. Or do you think it was the nuts? You know nuts, Julian, you know nuts—

JULIAN [*violently*]. Yes, I know nuts!

JANE. Well, sometimes nuts—

JULIAN [*almost screaming*]. Nuts! Nuts! In less than an hour Mr. Allen will be here!

JANE. Not to-day! Not this morning! Julian, you know I *always* have my cooking class here Thursday mornings. Oh, how could you, how could you?

JULIAN [*between clenched teeth*]. Don't drive me too far! I can't come into this house without smelling something baking or seeing something frizzling or hearing the loud-speaker bawl: "Mix the soda with the sour milk!" Bah! This isn't a studio, it's a bakery!

JANE. Oh, how *can* you be so cruel? You know cooking is my life work—

JULIAN [*leaning over the table; at her*]. Life work—bah! [*Seeing his mouth open,* JANE *stuffs a muffin in it. Angry, he rises, extracts the muffin and dashes it violently to the floor.*]

JANE [*rising, taking another biscuit and thrusting it at him*]. A gem, then, or a Sally Lunn?

JULIAN [*glaring at her with hate*]. Go away!

JANE [*trying to force a biscuit on him*]. Julian, a rusk or a popover—just to please your itty wifie— [*With a cry of rage, he grapples with her, gets her by the throat and strangles her. She falls to the floor with a thud and he stares at her.*]

JULIAN [*horrified*]. I've killed her! Great heavens, I've strangled her! [*Scene—black out. From behind the screen comes a broken snore and an inarticulate murmur. When the lights go on again, the table, chairs, and all evidences of the last scene are gone, including* JANE. JULIAN *in*

painter's smock, is discovered as before, at his easel. From off left, comes LOLA'S *voice singing the graduating five-tone scales with which singers practice, beginning half a tone higher with each repetition of the scale. It is most effective when accompanied on the piano, also off stage. For this, the octave of the tonic chord is struck twice, each time, followed by the scale up and down five tones.*]

LOLA [*off, left*]. Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah! Ah-ah! Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah!

JULIAN [*caricaturing her*]. Ah-ah! Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah! [*Tries in vain to concentrate upon his drawing.*]

LOLA [*off*]. Ah-ah! Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah!

JULIAN [*calling off left*]. Lola! *Will* you stop that!

LOLA [*off*]. Ah-ah! Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah!

JULIAN [*screaming*]. *Lola! For heaven's sake!* [LOLA CORTEZ *comes on from the left. Perhaps she is dressed in gaudy negligee, or costumed as Carmen. She is angry.*]

LOLA. Julian, how dare you mimic me! How dare you interfere wis my work?

JULIAN. *Your* work! *Your* work! What about *my* work? How do you expect *me* to work, with that ear-splitting noise going on?

LOLA [*more angry*]. Ear-splitting noise! You jealous fool! Somesing else will spleet your ears, if y'are not careful. Do not tak' my art too lightly, señor, and do not forget that y'are married to a gr-reat *diva*!

JULIAN [*mimicking*]. A gr-reat *deeva*, with a temperamental *dee!*

LOLA. Y'are jealous of my fame, of my foll'wing. And because I airn as much in one evening at the opera as you do in months of plodding. Snail! *Canaille!*

JULIAN [*screaming at her*]. *Cat! Porpoise!* Control yourself! Try to control yourself!

LOLA. *I* should control myself! Me—the gr-reatest of coloraturas!

JULIAN. Oh, if only I had married a beautiful dumbbell, like Maude Prouty!

LOLA. I shall leave you!

JULIAN. I'll help you pack! Then I can finish my sketch before—

LOLA [*snatching the dagger from the upper left corner of the drawing board, and slashing it across his sketch*]. That for your art! Pah! Pah! Pah!

JULIAN [*snapping fingers, mimicking her*]. And that for yours! Pah! Pah! Pah! [LOLA *turns on him with a cry of fury and stabs him with the dagger. He falls and she stands over him, dagger in hand. Scene—black-out. When the lights go on again, as in each of these little scenes, they light only upper portion of stage, around easel. This time* MAUDE PROUTY *is seen sitting in the chair on the dais, but* JULIAN *is absent.* MAUDE *is draped in a Grecian robe and girdle, or some period costume. But she is powdering her nose and face and gazing into the mirror of a modern vanity-case. She turns right and puts down her puff at the sound of* MRS. THROCKMORTON *entering R.*]

MRS. THROCKMORTON [*approaching* MAUDE *impressively*]. Oh—er—is this Mr. Brooks's studio—Mr. *Julian Brooks?*

MAUDE [*not rising*]. Ye-es.

MRS. THROCKMORTON. Are you his model?

MAUDE [*who speaks throughout with a drawl of indifference*]. Well, in a way—that is, I wa-as.

MRS. THROCKMORTON. Oh, I see, he's discharged you.

MAUDE. No, he didn't discharge me, he *married* me. Would you like to see the wedding certificate?

MRS. THROCKMORTON. No, thanks—I simply wished to know to whom I was talking.

MAUDE. Oh. Well, I used to be Maude Prouty, the beautiful dumbbell.

MRS. THROCKMORTON. Really—it doesn't matter. I am Mrs. Wellington G. Throckmorton, wife of the railway magnate.

MAUDE. Yes?

MRS. THROCKMORTON. Yes. . . . I had an appointment with Mr. Brooks to see about having my portrait painted.

MAUDE. Oh, I see, you're a sitter. Won't you sit down?

MRS. THROCKMORTON. I am not accustomed to waiting for any one. Is Mr. Brooks out?

MAUDE. In a way he is, and in a way he isn't.

MRS. THROCKMORTON. I don't understand. Either he is out or he is in. Which is it?

MAUDE. Well, in a way he is out, and in a way he is in.

MRS. THROCKMORTON. Just where is your husband?

MAUDE [*points off left*]. He's in the bathroom—where he hanged himself.

MRS. THROCKMORTON. Hanged himself! Is he dead?

MAUDE. I think he must be—by this time—would you like to look and see? [MRS. THROCKMORTON *rushes off, left.* MAUDE *resumes her occupation of powdering her face and gazing into her mirror. From off, left,* MRS. THROCKMORTON *gives a long horror-stricken scream. Scene—black-out. After a moment,* JULIAN *is heard to snort and gurgle and moan.*]

JULIAN [*in the dark*]. Mary! *Mary!* MARY! [MARY LEIGH *enters from right, presses button on wall, and ALL lights go on.*]

MARY [*coming center*]. Julian! It's nearly twelve o'clock! I'm sorry, but I must have fallen asleep, myself. [JULIAN *emerges from behind the screen, NOT wearing his smock, but dragging a coverlet, which he disentangles from his person and throws back on couch.*]

JULIAN. Mary! I've had such a dreadful nightmare.

MARY. You'd better hurry—

JULIAN. Please!—don't ever hurry me!

MARY. You're late now—for the party.

JULIAN. No more parties for me!

MARY. Kay Norton will be waiting for you—

JULIAN. Let her wait! Let 'em *all* wait! [*The telephone rings. He makes no move to answer it.*]

MARY. Shall I answer it?

JULIAN. No—let it ring. We—Mary, we'll have a little party by ourselves—right here. [Indicates tray on table.]

MARY [*glad*]. Julian! [*She uncovers the tray.*] But there isn't much to eat—shall I make some gems or popovers?

JULIAN. Bah!—I mean, *No! No popovers! Never!* [MARY *contentedly arranges the dishes on the table, meanwhile humming the opening measures of "Home, Sweet Home."*

JULIAN. And don't *sing!*

MARY [*smiling at him*]. Go and wash your face—and you'll feel better.

JULIAN. *No!* Br-r-r! Horrible! I never want to see that bathroom again! Oh, Mary—Mary, I learned something while I was asleep. That list of yours was no good.

MARY. List of mine? You mean *your* list?

JULIAN. No—my list has only one name on it—and the worst of it is, she's never given me the slightest reason to put it there. I don't suppose she'd have me—don't believe she's ever thought of me that way.

MARY. Why don't you ask her?

JULIAN. Too risky—couldn't stand a refusal. You see, she's been a sister to me, and a pal—wonderful—but she doesn't suspect I want to marry her.

MARY [*smiling*]. She doesn't? When did you begin to suspect it, yourself?

JULIAN. Just to-night—but *I've* been a *fool.*

MARY. Well—if you're afraid to ask her—it's leap year, to-morrow—perhaps she'll ask you.

JULIAN. Not a chance! But I don't want to wait. I want her in my arms when the horns blow.

MARY [*going to him*]. I'll help you all I can, Julian.

JULIAN. Mary! [*He takes her in his arms. She nestles there, and he kisses her. Horns, sirens, factory whistles, are heard off, in all directions. Telephone bell adds to the general din.*]

[CURTAIN]

TWELFTH NIGHT

TWELFTH NIGHT FESTIVITIES *

By

ETHEL LOUISE KNOX

* Courtesy of the University Extension Division, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisc., and the author. Copies can be secured from University Extension for 25 cents each.

CHARACTERS

HERALD (two, one for outer and one for inner door, are desirable).
PAGE TO MASTER OF REVELS (may be taken by boy or girl).
MASTER OF REVELS AND HIS FOLLOWERS (see text).
MINSTRELS (at least four; more are desirable).
ROYAL PROCESSION (as indicated in text).
BISHOP.
LADY PRIORESS (the principal, a teacher, the chaperon, or any woman whom the revelers wish to honor).
RED CROSS KNIGHT.
MORRICE DANCERS (four boys and four girls, or eight girls).
BEFANA.
PROPHET.
MUMMERS (see play).
WASSAIL BEARERS (five).
PURVEYORS (six, two preceding and two on either side of cart).
FIGURES FOR TABLEAUX.

Everybody in costume not otherwise assigned may be included in the Royal procession. Every one should wear some sort of fancy costume.

DIRECTIONS FOR PRODUCTION

This Festival should be given in a large auditorium or gymnasium. The audience occupies seats around three sides, leaving a large open space in the middle. At the end of the room in one corner is the throne, and in the other the platform upon which the tableaux are shown.

The Master of Revels stands in center of floor during all

of his announcements. At other times he may retire to a seat reserved for him at one side. At each blast of the trumpet, the Master's Page goes out for a moment, and returning almost immediately, speaks to the Master, who, turning to the King and the Court, announces the new arrival.

The court is assembled on either side of the open space between the throne and the tableau stage. Tableau I represents the wise men offering gifts, with shepherds in the background. Tableau II is a grouping of modern warriors and war workers. The Red Cross should be prominently displayed.

PROPERTIES

Huge scroll for Master of Revels.

Wassail bowl—punch bowl filled with rich fruit punch. Cart or other device upon which it is borne should be decorated gayly with Christmas garlands.

Cake—the larger, the better, cone-shaped, built of several layers, frosted and decorated as gayly as possible with red candies and holly, and bearing at the very top a bayberry or a bright red candle. The cake must contain a large bean.

TWELFTH NIGHT FESTIVITIES

HERALD'S *trumpet heard off stage. Enter* HERALD *to center where he blows another blast. Exit* HERALD. *Enter* PAGE *to* MASTER OF REVELS.

PAGE. My Lord Morris [*name of boy taking part*] appointed by his most gracious majesty, the King of Twelfth Night, to be Master of the Twelfth Night Revels, approacheth. [*Enter* MASTER OF REVELS *with followers fantastically costumed: boy or girl beating drum, bear, pig, astrologer, court fool, fairies, giant, horse, Egyptian girl, Robin Hood, abbot, goblin, rooster, etc. After a madcap dance, the* MASTER *waves his staff, his followers find seats, while the* MASTER *proceeds to read the* KING'S *proclamation.*]

MASTER. Oyez! Oyez!! Oyez!!!

The proclamation of his most gracious majesty,
The King of Twelfth Night!

[*Reading.*] I give free leave to Lord Morris [*name of boy who assumes character*] to be Master of the Twelfth Night Revels, and also I give free leave to the said Lord Morris to command every person whatsoever, as well teachers as others, to be at his command whensoever he shall sound his music, and to do him good service though I myself be not present, at their perils. I give full power to his lordship to break all locks, doors, and latches to come to all those who presume to disobey his lordship's commands.

[*Speaking.*] On Twelfth Night I am Lord Supreme; by my magic art I transform you all into little children, and charge you on your fealty, to act only as such. I absolve you all from wisdom. I bid you be just wise enough to make fools of yourselves, and do decree that none shall sit

apart in pride and eke in self-sufficiency to laugh at others. [*Adapted from Fitchburg State Normal Pageant. Trumpet sounds. Music heard off stage.*]

MASTER. The Royal Minstrels! Make way! [*Enter* MINSTRELS *playing. Trumpet sounds "Flourish."*]

MASTER. Their Majesties, the King and Queen of Twelfth Night! [*Enter* ROYAL PROCESSION.]

1. Pages (two)
2. Lords and Ladies in Waiting
3. King and Queen
4. Pages (two)
5. Lords and Ladies of the Court

KING [*from the throne*]. Oh, loyal and noble subjects, I welcome you to this, the last of the Christmas celebrations. His Lordship, the Master of Revels, has given much thought to your pleasure this Twelfth Night, and 'tis the royal wish that every true and loyal subject this night do the bidding of the Master and forgetting all wisdom and learning, spend the last hours of this festival season in mirth and joy and gladness.

LORDS AND LADIES. God save the King! [*Trumpet sounds.* HERALD *enters and speaks to* MASTER.]

MASTER. Our friend the Lord Bishop approacheth! [*His* PAGE *goes to the door and precedes the guest to the center of the room, where the two* PAGES *near step to the guest's side and escort him to the foot of the throne. They then take the places of the two* PAGES *near the throne who pass quietly to the places formerly occupied by the other two. The* KING *rises to welcome the* BISHOP *who is given the seat of honor beside the* KING. *Trumpet sounds. Same ceremony as above.*]

MASTER. We are honored by the presence of our beloved Lady Prioress. [*Same ceremony as above.* LADY PRIORESS *is given seat at left of* QUEEN. *Courtiers rise as she passes to her seat.*]

KING. We would hear the merry minstrels. [MINSTRELS *play, ending their number with a carol in which all join, the*

MASTER *leading. Choristers might be introduced at this point to lead the singing, not to do it all. Any well-known Christmas carols may be used.*]

KING. My noble countrymen, 'tis a custom time-honored in our land to hear at this time from the lips of our reverend father, the Bishop, news of great import to all true sons of Christendom. So at our earnest entreaty he hath left his books of learning, his fasting and vigils, to join with us in our merrymaking and to perform the time-honored rite as did his fathers in the office before him. Good father, wilt thou make known to these, my subjects and thine, the time upon which the joyous Eastertide shall fall?

BISHOP. Dearly beloved, I have come to announce to you on this Epiphany Eve that in the present year of our Lord's reign upon earth, the Holy Day of Easter doth fall upon the —— day of April (or March) which is in accordance to the calendar of the Church on the tenth Golden Number, Dominical letter "B" of the aforesaid year. Wherefore, most dearly beloved, take ye good heed, and fulfill your duties to thy mother, the Church, against the coming of the blessed Eastertide. [*Trumpet from outer door.* MASTER *sends* PAGE *to learn who is without while the court waits expectantly.* PAGE *returns and speaks to* MASTER.]

MASTER. There waits without a brave Red Cross Knight but recently returned from crusading in the Holy Land.

KING [*lifting scepter*]. Let him be brought before the throne. [*Enter* RED CROSS KNIGHT *preceded by* PAGE. *Bows before throne.*]

KING. We would hear of thy journeyings, Sir Knight.

RED CROSS KNIGHT. Far and wide I traveled, O King, with Peter the Hermit, while he preached of the indignities and cruelties that the Christians of the Holy Land suffered at the hands of the Infidels. Truly the man seemed a messenger from Heaven, O King. Throngs were eager to follow him whereso'er he bade. Then we grew impatient because the regular armies were delayed. We urged him to place

himself at our head and lead us straight to the Holy Land. There were many thousands of us, O King, too many for one man to lead, so he divided the command with one Walter, called the Penniless. And our number was as the sands of the sea.

By an overland route we traveled, through many countries, but with our faces ever toward the stronghold of the Turk. Peter, good leader that he was, lavished all his tender care upon us, and earnest and eager were his bold followers. But by and by our food failed. We ate only enough to keep us from starvation, and soon many of our number sickened, and when there was no longer water to quench their thirst, they fell by the roadside no longer able to journey with us. Misery and sorrow and wretchedness pursued us, so that no more than two hundred survived to reach the Bosporus.

Ten days we rested, regaining health with nourishment, and energy and courage from the lips of our leader, but mourning, alas, the loss of the pious Walter who had been left behind too weak to follow and perishing of thirst. Then the Hermit bade me take my dead comrade's command, and, mustering many boats, we crossed the Bosporus. Fatal move! [*Bows his head.*]

QUEEN. And then, noble knight, and then?

RED CROSS KNIGHT. Would we had turned back, O Queen! 'Tis all a tale too dreadful for thy gentle ear.

QUEEN AND LORDS AND LADIES. Nay, tell us, we would hear!

RED CROSS KNIGHT. We had scarce set foot upon the shore, nay, the vessels were not yet lightened of their cargo, when a murderous cry sounded in our ears. The Turks, the bloody Turks, wild men truly, beasts, not men, O King! The monsters surrounded us, drew their gleaming swords, and slaughtered right and left the soldiers of the Cross.

LORDS AND LADIES. All? But Peter? And thyself?

RED CROSS KNIGHT. Peter was slain, resisting nobly, shouting orders to his bewildered followers, but slain at

the first onslaught. Myself did try to rally the scattered forces of our men, but what can the pebble do against the forces of the sea? On and on they came, resistless, mad with their easy victory! Would I had died among them. Providence permitted not that mercy. A prisoner, I did their bidding, scoffed at, mocked, mistreated, yea, bound and scourged to give the heathen pleasure.

QUEEN. But thou art here to tell the tale, Sir Knight!

RED CROSS KNIGHT. Yea, I escaped, but did me not relate that portion of the tale, kind Lady! 'Tis not long since, and my flesh goes cold but thinking of it. Weeks we traveled in the darkness of night, hiding at the first streaks of dawn. Six of us reached the Danube. There we parted, each taking his separate way. At last I came to merry England in this festal season when all true Knights of the Cross must rejoice, forgetting the sorrows of the past and looking toward the victory the future holds.

KING. The regular army has moved forward, Sir Knight. Thou art too late to join with thy peers.

RED CROSS KNIGHT. Yea, King, but the day after tomorrow, my gracious sovereign willing, I start again for Jerusalem, traveling a different route, and mayhap reaching there in time to avenge the wrong done my comrades, and to participate in wresting from the heathen those sacred spots which belong by right to Christendom. [*Applause.*]

KING. Success and good fortune attend thee on thy journey! We thank thee for thy tale of hardy adventure. This one eve, we beg thee to forget thy trials and misfortune, and join with us in our Yuletide festivity.

RED CROSS KNIGHT. I thank thee, O King! [*Turning.*] Long live the King!

LORDS AND LADIES. Long live the King! [*Trumpet sounds.* HERALD *enters as before. Speaks to* MASTER.]

MASTER. Hail to the jolly Morrice dancers! [MINSTRELS *tune their instruments and as soon as they begin their dance music, the dancers run and dance to center of room*

where their formal dance takes place. KING *may recall them if he chooses.*]

MASTER. Behold the Vision! [*Pointing to tableau stage. Tableau of Wise Men offering gifts. Music. Trumpet sounds at outer door. Same ceremony as with* RED CROSS KNIGHT.]

MASTER. A little strange old woman, footsore and weary, craves admission!

KING [*raising scepter*]. Bring her within! [*Enter* BEFANA, *haltingly, leaning on a cane.*]

KING. Who art thou?

BEFANA. My name, Befana, O King!

KING. Weary thou art, Befana, why comest thou here? Tell us thy tale.

BEFANA. It was a cold winter's night, O King, when as I was seated by my warm fireside, three men came to my door. I bade them come in and warm themselves. They told me their story, how they were following the light of the star, and they asked me to go with them on their journey. But I was loath to leave my own warm fireside to follow the cold light of the star. And—and—so those three men, kings like thee, O Sire, Melchoir, Caspar, Balthasar, left my door to follow the light of the gleaming star. Somehow, O King, my fire burned not so bright, it grew colder and I—I grew lonely and sad. And—then—then, O Sire, I set out to follow the star and to find these men, but it seemed I could never quite overtake them, and I have come to thee, O King, for help. Canst thou tell me where they are? [KING *motions* QUEEN *to speak to her.*]

QUEEN. Befana, thou art too late. The wise men have passed long ago in a vision glorious to behold. But *now* they appeared to all this court, but thou comest too late. Go to the good Bishop, that he may comfort thee; then rest ye here his Twelfth Night, and forget thy sorrow for a little space. [BISHOP *extends his hands over her for a moment, then tells her to be seated on the step at his side.*]

A COURTIER [*after whispering with members of the court*

and being urged by them by nods and sighs, rising]. Your Majesty, the lords and ladies of the court beg that the dancers (or minstrels) be commanded to perform, for truly they have mightily pleased the assembled company.

KING. The Dancers! The Dancers! Come forth! [*or the* MINSTRELS.]

LORDS AND LADIES. The Dancers! [*The* DANCERS *give a second performance, or the* MINSTRELS, *as the company prefers. Trumpet sounds from outer door. Same ceremoney as with* RED CROSS KNIGHT. *Enter* PROPHET, *who stands some distance from the throne*]:

Listen, O ye King and people!
I am come before ye to prophesy,
To prophesy that upon the fourteenth year
Of the twentieth century,
There shall come to pass a War—
A war that shall overshadow all preceding wars
As the mountain overshadows the ant hill.
And during that War, men shall fly through the air,
Sail under the sea,
And hurl death many leagues!
And from the distress of this War
There shall arise a mighty company
Which shall work wondrous healing
And shall be known unto men as the Red Cross.
But O ye King and people!
Heed carefully, for this I say unto ye,
At the end of this War
The Holy Land shall be freed from the hand of the Saracen!
I have prophesied. Behold! [*Points to vision.*]
[*Vision of soldier, sailor, Red Cross worker, etc. Tableau opposite throne. Trumpet sounds.* MASTER *announces arrival of* MUMMERS.]

MASTER. The Mummers! The Mummers! [*Cry is taken up by court.*]

KING [*rising and extending his scepter for attention*]. From the olden time, the mummers have joined in our festivities. Young men of the town and country make merry, proclaiming in grotesque character the conquest of Righteousness, in the person of St. George, over Paganism, typified by the Saracen, and Evil in the guise of the hideous dragon. Take heed, therefore, that while ye laugh and make merry at the antics of the mad mummers, ye forget not the truth they set forth. When St. George strikes down the treacherous Turk, rejoice; when the Turk revives, know that Righteousness can have no easy victory. If the play is pleasing forget not to show thy gratitude when their money box is displayed. [*Raises scepter. Enter* MUMMERS, *running to center stage, and bowing low before the* KING, *who once more raises his scepter. Then all take their places and begin to play.*]

OLD FATHER CHRISTMAS
GRAND TURK
ST. GEORGE
DRAGON
DOCTOR
BEELZEBUB
DRUMMERS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

Here come I, old Father Christmas,
Christmas or not,
I hope old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot.
A room—make room here, gallant boys,
And give us room to rhyme,
We're come to show activity
Upon a Christmas time.
Acting youth or acting age,
The like was never seen upon this stage;
If you don't believe what I now say,
Enter St. George and clear the way.

ST. GEORGE.

Here come I, St. George, the valiant man,
With naked sword and spear in hand,
Who fought the dragon and brought him to the slaughter,
And for this won the King of Egypt's Daughter.
What man or mortal will dare to stand
Before me with my sword in hand?
I'll slay him and cut him as small as flies,
And send him to Jamaica to make mince pies.

GRAND TURK.

Here come I, a Turkish knight,
In Turkish land I learned to fight,
I'll fight St. George with courage bold,
And if his blood's hot, will make it cold.

ST. GEORGE.

If thou art a Turkish knight,
Draw out thy sword and let us fight.
[*A battle ensues and the* TURK *falls.*]

ST. GEORGE.

Ladies and gentlemen,
You see what I've done,
I've cut this Turk down
Like the evening sun.
Is there any doctor that can be found
To cure this knight of his deadly wound?

DOCTOR.

Here come I, a doctor,
A ten-pound doctor,
I've a little bottle in my pocket
Called hokum, shokum, alicampane,
I'll touch his eyes, nose, mouth, and chin,
And say, "Rise, dead man," and he'll fight again.
[DOCTOR *ministers to* TURK *while* ST. GEORGE *speaks.*]

ST. GEORGE.

Here am I, St. George with shining armor bright,
I am a famous champion, also a worthy knight,

Seven long years in a close cave was kept,
And out of that into a prison leaped,
From out of that into a rock of stones,
Then I laid down my grievous bones,
Many a giant did I subdue,
And ran a fiery dragon through.
I fought the man of Sillotree,
And still will gain the victory,
First, then I fought in France,
Second, I fought in Spain,
Thirdly, I came to ——
To fight the Turk again.
[*A fight ensues*—TURK *slain.*]

BEELZEBUB.

Here come I, Beelzebub,
Under my arm I carry a club,
Under my chin I carry a pan,
Don't I look a nice young man?

ANOTHER FROM THE COMPANY.

Ladies and gentlemen,
Our story is ended,
Our money box is recommended;
Five or six shillings will do us no harm,
Silver or copper or gold if you can.

[*Money box passed noisily. At entrance:* Wassail! Wassail! Wassail! (*Pronounced "wassul."*) KING *raises scepter. Enter wassail bearers, bringing bowl on cart much draped and festooned. The caller precedes the cart, calling "Wassail" as he approaches the throne.* KING, QUEEN, *and Court partake of wassail. Trumpet sounds.*]

MASTER. The Twelfth Night Cake. [*Cake is brought in on cart by* PURVEYORS *who place it before the throne.*]

KING. Loyal subjects, gaze upon the Twelfth Night Cake! In accordance with the ancient custom, the court shall now make merry until the candle burns low. When the herald sounds the trumpet, gather ye about and partake.

He who shall find in his portion the Twelfth Night Bean shall be proclaimed King of the Bean. He shall choose a consort to rule with him next Yuletide, and to them shall we surrender our scepter and our throne.

He then leads the QUEEN *from the throne and dances with her, the lords and ladies of the court following. An old English folk dance is desirable if it is possible to teach it to everybody beforehand, or, if the* MASTER OF REVELS *is capable of doing it he may instruct the whole company in a simple folk dance. Games may be substituted.*

When the candle has burned low, the HERALDS *proclaim the fact and the* QUEEN *with her attendants approaches the cake. She cuts the first slice, and the* PURVEYORS *present it to the* LADY PRIORESS. THE MAID OF HONOR *cuts the second and it is presented to the* BISHOP. *The other ladies cut the rest, which is distributed to the company by the* PURVEYORS.

Informal dancing and merrymaking continue until the bean is discovered. The new KING *or* QUEEN *chooses a consort and approaches the throne, where the old king passes over his scepter.*

The new KING *makes a brief impromptu speech in which he bids the dancing continue until the midnight hour (or until the time specified for closing of the party). Lights burn low—*

The King of the Bean is King of Twelfth Night for the following year's festivities.

ARBOR DAY

THE TREASURE CHEST *

A CHILDREN'S FAIRY PLAY

By

JOSEPHINE THORP

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CHARACTERS

ELVES (two, or some even number) : They carry short wands to which are attached several small bells; each has one arm about a bundle of ferns when they enter, and their costumes are brown and green.

LEAVES (eleven, or an uneven number) : The tallest leaf, who does not dance, carries a golden casket; the others carry long sprays of leaves; their costumes are green.

THE FOREST-SPIRIT : A tall, dark-haired girl in a green robe bordered with gold; carries a scepter tipped with a golden pine-cone.

CLOUDS (eleven, or an uneven number) : The tallest cloud, who does not dance, carries a golden casket; the others carry scarves of rose and violet; their dresses are of gray.

SUNBEAMS (eleven, or an uneven number) : The tallest sunbeam, who does not dance, carries a golden casket; the rest carry gold-tipped spears; their dresses are yellow.

WAVES (eleven, or an uneven number) : The tallest carries a golden casket; the others carry blue scarves with a silver border; their dresses are sea blue.

SEA-SPIRIT : A tall, fair-haired boy, in a short tunic of sea blue bordered with silver; crown, trident and sandals of silver.

DREAMS (six, or an even number) : They are taller than the other dancers and their Greek robes are in soft shades of rose, blue, violet, green, orange and yellow; they all carry iridescent bubbles.

MISER : A bent old man in a dark cloak, who leans on a cane and looks furtively about as he advances.

PIRATES (six, or an even number) : Tall boys in rough sea

clothes, their heads tied in bright handkerchiefs, and rings in their ears; they carry bundles tied in gay handkerchiefs, except the chief, who wears pistols in his belt and carries no bundle.

A Boy

A Girl

An Older Girl

Little Children

Ordinary out-door clothes; two of the group carry a lunchbasket.

THE TREASURE CHEST

The time is to-day. The scene a forest by the sea, where in an open mossy spot a rocky ledge makes a sort of throne. Bushes and small trees, which conceal the R. and L. entrances, grow thickly on either side of the ledge; and behind it one gets glimpses of the sea between great trees. A little path winds through them to the throne.

Behind the scenes a bell chimes; from the bushes at R. an ELF *peeps out, then steals cautiously forward and waves his wand with its tinkling bells. There is an answering tinkle from the opposite side and a second* ELF *steps from the bushes.*

FIRST ELF.

Ho, brother!

SECOND ELF.

Is there any one about?

FIRST ELF.

Steal quietly yonder while I go this way,
And if you find all quiet come back again;—
Then we will call the rustling Forest-leaves
To come and dance with us.

SECOND ELF [*lays finger on lips*].

Hush!

FIRST ELF [*also lays finger on lips*].

Hush!

TOGETHER.

We go!

[*Music begins softly; and* ELVES *go to R. and L. peering behind the bushes, then come toward center;*

nodding to each other, they lay the ferns they carry in a ring on the ground before the throne while the music grows louder. When the ring is finished they leap into its center, lift their wands, tinkling the bells loudly, and call joyfully.]

FIRST ELF.

Come, Forest-leaves, come out and dance with us!

SECOND ELF.

The wood is quiet; the fairy ring is laid!

TOGETHER.

Dear Forest-leaves, come out and dance with us!

[*Music grows still louder; from both sides and the back come the* LEAVES, *who join hands and dance about the* ELVES *in the Fairy ring. After a moment the* ELVES *step from the ring and join the Fairies in their dance, and all play merrily together for a moment or two. Then a bell behind the scenes chimes and the Fairies gradually stop to listen, making two groups, one at either side of the stage. Behind the ledge a voice begins to sing, growing louder as if coming nearer; the* ELVES *lift their wands, Fairies their sprays, in greeting. Up the path comes the* FOREST-SPIRIT, *and as she takes her place upon the throne* ELVES *bow and* LEAVES *curtsy low. Music ends.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

My Forest-leaves and Elves, this is a day
Of great rejoicing, here in Fairy-land,
Because your cousins, Clouds, Sunbeams, and Waves,
Will bring their wondrous gifts into these woods,
To lay with yours, safe in our Treasure Chest,
For mortal folk to find if they but search;—
[*She raises her wand; soft music far away; all listen.*]
Hark! Do you hear a sound a long way off?
[*All nod in assent.*]
It is the voice of my great brother Wind,
Who brings the Clouds, his children, on his wings,

But is himself invisible to us.

[*Music grows louder; and* CLOUDS *dance up center path as if blown by the wind, and kneel before the throne.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Welcome, Cloud-fairies, to our mossy glades;
The Forest-leaves, your cousins of the woods,
Wait eagerly for you on every side.
Dance with them till our other guests shall come.

[LEAVES *run joyfully forward and meet the* CLOUDS; *all dance, a* LEAF *with a* CLOUD, *while the* ELVES *tinkle their bells. When they have danced awhile they stop as if to rest; and the Hymn to the Sun is heard outside; all listen, then kneel facing the path.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

It is the music of the rising Sun,
Who will not come himself into the woods,
Lest we should die before his glowing face,
But sends his Sunbeams to our gathering.

[*As music grows louder the* SUNBEAMS *run in from back and kneel before the throne, lifting their spears in greeting.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Bright little Sunbeams who so gayly come,
Dance for a while among the Leaves and Clouds,
Until my brother-spirit from the Sea,
Shall bring his waves to join our happy throng.

[SUNBEAMS *rise and dance in and out among the other Fairies; then the dancers break into groups of three, a* LEAF, CLOUD, *and* SUNBEAM *in each group; all dance till the sound of a horn is heard outside, when the dancers stop and the group divides as all listen. Sea music begins; and* WAVES *run in, gathering in a group at center; through them comes the* SEA-SPIRIT; *and* WAVES *follow him to the throne, where the* FOREST-SPIRIT *rises to greet*

him; WAVES *kneel as* SPIRITS *meet and* SEA-SPIRIT *speaks.*]

SEA-SPIRIT.

Fair Spirit of the Forest, we are here!

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Brother who rises from the mighty sea
To meet us, rest awhile upon this throne,
And let the fairy waves which follow you
Join in the joyous dance of Sunbeams, Clouds,
And Forest-leaves, until my little Elves
Bring in the Treasure Chest we have prepared,
In which the Sea and Forest, Clouds and Sun
May place the gifts which we would give to men,
To heal their bodies, and refresh their souls.

[*Sea music begins again and* WAVES *rise, coming forward to meet the other Fairies, who advance with outstretched hands;* ELVES *run out. Fairies dance in groups of four, a* WAVE, CLOUD, SUNBEAM, *and* LEAF *in each group.* ELVES *return with the Treasure Chest, which they place before the throne; as they do so the dancers separate, each joining their own group. The* LEAVES *are at L., the* SUNBEAMS *next, then the* WAVES, *with the* CLOUDS *at R. All join hands and come forward a few steps, then fall on their knees, while the two* SPIRITS *rise and music stops.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Dear Spirits of the blessed Out-of-Doors,
Our Treasure Chest is ready;—lift the lid
For us, my little Elves. Dear brother Sea,
What is the gift which you will place within?

SEA-SPIRIT.

Rise up, my Waves, and bring the double gift
The Sea will lay within the Treasure Chest.

[WAVES *rise, come forward and kneel in a group at right of chest while the* WAVE *with casket speaks.*]

WAVE.

A store of wholesome food we bring to man,

To make his body strong; we also give
A broad highway that he may SHARE his gifts,
And by the sharing make his spirit strong.
[WAVE *lays casket in the Treasure Chest.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Food, and a broad highway which lets men share
Their plenty with their neighbors;—royal gifts
Are these you place within our chest, dear Sea.—
Who brings the next gift?
[CLOUDS *rise and go forward.*]

SEA-SPIRIT [*speaking as they advance*].

See, the rising Clouds are drifting closer to the Treasure Chest!
[*As* CLOUDS *go forward* WAVES *draw back, making a group in front of the bushes at R.* WAVES *kneel at left of chest.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Gray Clouds, what is the gift you bring for men?
[CLOUD *with casket speaks.*]

CLOUD.

Here's living moisture for a thirsty world,
To comfort and refresh all living things,
And shadows soft to rest men's tired hearts,
Drawing them close together in the dark!

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Refreshment for the body and the soul!
The quiet rain to make fields green and bright,
And the soft shadows, resting tired hearts,
Until they feel their brotherhood again.—
Men sorely need your precious gifts, gray Clouds;
Lay them beside the others in the chest.
[CLOUD *lays casket in the chest; and the others rise, lifting their scarves to make arches. At the same time the* SUNBEAMS *rise and come forward under the arches, while* CLOUDS *draw to L., making a group like that of the* WAVES *at R. The* SUNBEAMS *kneel at right of the chest. As they advance the* SEA-SPIRIT *speaks.*]

SEA-SPIRIT.

Look where the Sunbeams steal between the Clouds!

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Bright little Sunbeams who have come to us
From our great brother Sun, what is the gift
He gave into your hands to bring to men?

SUNBEAM.

We bring life-giving radiance and warmth,
A vital spark to stir all living things,
To make men's crops increase, their bodies strong,
To cheer their hearts and purify their souls!

FOREST-SPIRIT.

A vital spark to give men fuller life,
More food, more strength, more cheer, more purity!
Dear Sunbeams, 'tis a wondrous gift you bring;
So place it carefully within the chest.

[SUNBEAM *lays casket in the chest; and all join the* WAVE *group at R. As they do so the* LEAVES *rise, coming forward as* SUNBEAMS *go, and in their turn kneel beside the chest at L.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

My little Leaves, it is your turn to tell
What gift you bring unto the Treasure Chest.

LEAF.

We bring the fragrant breath of cool green woods,
Where mighty trees stretch up their arms to heaven,
And Dreams are born, which lead the souls of men
To friendliness and happiness and peace!

FOREST-SPIRIT.

The world is tired with bitterness and strife,
And needs to dream in happiness awhile,
Till peace and friendliness restore men's souls.—
So lay your lovely gift beside the rest.

[LEAF *lays casket in the chest; and the* LEAVES *join* CLOUDS *at L.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Now we will close the lid and draw aside,

Till men shall find their treasure for themselves.

[*She closes chest. The* SEA-SPIRIT *speaks.*]

SEA-SPIRIT.

Suppose it falls into unworthy hands,
That will not share gifts meant for ALL to use?
Should we not weave a spell about the place,
To keep our treasure from mis-use or spoil?

FOREST-SPIRIT.

The thought is wise. Come, Clouds and Forest-leaves,
Sunbeams and Waves, and weave a magic spell
To keep from evil hands our gifts to men.

[*She lifts her wand as she speaks; and as she does so the Fairies come forward very slowly, till when she finishes they make a semi-circle about the chest.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT [*speaks words of the Spell*].

Let those who keep our treasure for themselves
Be powerless to take it from this place,
In spite of all their strength, or craft, or guile;
But if the finders wish to share our gifts
With those who can not find us for themselves,
Then let them see, however small their strength,
It is an easy and a happy task.—
Now from the forest let us call the Dreams,
To guard our treasure from all evil things,
Until at last its rightful owners come.

[*Dream music begins; and Fairies begin to dance about the Treasure Chest, waving their arms as weaving a spell. When they have circled it twice they fall on their knees in a semi-circle before it, but facing away from it; and stretching their arms toward the forest at front and both sides, sing the "Call to the Dreams."*]

"CALL TO THE DREAMS"

[*Sung by all the Fairies.*]

Fair Dreams, oh, come and help us

To guard the treasure well,
Which here we leave for man-kind,
Within this forest dell;
Let only true hearts take the gifts
Who will love and use them best;
Come to us, Dreams, and help us
To guard our Treasure Chest!

[*While the Fairies sing the* DREAMS *come softly in from both sides, each carrying an iridescent bubble lifted high in both hands. As the song ends the* FOREST- *and* SEA-SPIRITS *lift their wand and trident and the* SUNBEAMS, CLOUDS, WAVES *and* LEAVES *slip behind the chest and gather close about them. Music grows very soft as the* FOREST-SPIRIT *speaks.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Fair Dreams, we leave our treasure in your hands.
Keep it from greedy hearts and selfish hands;
But help true hearts to take the fairy gift,
If any such there chance to come this way.

[*Music grows louder; and* DREAMS *begin to dance before the Treasure Chest, while* SPIRITS *and Fairies slip away down the center path out of sight. While the* DREAMS *still dance a loud, discordant chord is heard; and they instantly stop. The music begins a harsh melody; and as it grows louder the* MISER *enters by the center path. As he advances the* DREAMS *draw back into the forest, where they are hidden from the* MISER, *but not from the audience. They watch him as he pauses to rest and speaks as if to himself.*]

MISER.

They told me there was treasure in these woods;
And so I hurried, hurried night and day,
To get here first and take it for myself
And when I find it I will take it all,
And hide it where no one except myself

Shall ever see it. I must search about.
[*While speaking he moves about, poking with his cane, and presently finds the chest.*]
A chest! Perhaps the treasure! Let me look!
[*He opens the lid and kneels.*]
O riches, riches more than all my dreams!
And all for me alone! Ha, ha, ha, ha!
[*Laughs wildly, then starts and rises.*]
Suppose some other travelers come this way
And see the treasure; they will want a share!
They shall not have it; it belongs to ME.
[*He tries to lift the chest, but cannot move it. After a moment's unsuccessful effort he falls on his knees behind chest and flings his arms over it.*]
I cannot lift it; but it shall be mine;
And somehow I must take it from this place,
Or I shall lose it.—Wait and let me think.
[*Still kneeling behind the chest he rests his head on one hand as if thinking. Dream music begins softly; and the* DREAMS *steal forward a few steps. One of them touches the* MISER *gently on the shoulder, and as he lifts his head and sees her she smiles, holding out her bubble to him while the other* DREAMS *beckon. For a moment he seems to waver; then he thrusts the* DREAMS *away, and, grasping the chest with one hand, covers his eyes with the other.*]
No, I'll not share the treasure; it belongs
To me alone; and you are only dreams.
[*The* DREAMS *go sadly away, the* MISER *getting to his feet and shaking his fist after them. When they are out of sight he tries again to lift the chest, and, when he cannot, stands as if thinking. In a moment he smiles slyly and chuckles.*]
I have it now; first cover it from sight,
Then hurry home to fetch a large, strong bag,
And take it all, a little at a time!

[*He covers chest with branches and goes off, looking back every few steps till he is out of sight. When he has gone, a sea-chanty is heard outside; and, as it grows louder, a group of* PIRATES *come up the center path.*]

PIRATE CHIEF.

Comrades, this looks as if it were the spot.
The treasure must be near. Scatter and search.
A rich reward to him who finds it first.—
I'll guard the path and see that no one comes.
[*He draws a pistol and stands on guard at the top of the path while the others search. At length one finds the chest; and all gather round it, pulling away the branches which conceal it.*]

PIRATE CHIEF.

A richer treasure than we thought to find!
We will divide the booty into three,
One part to use in common for our band—
[*All nod.*]
One part to be divided equally
Among you all— The rest belongs to me.

PIRATES [*together, angrily*].

No! No!

FIRST PIRATE. We share alike!

SECOND PIRATE. Come, strike him down!

PIRATES.

Yes, strike him down! Ah, ah! Strike, strike him down!
[*With hoarse cries they draw their knives and advance on the* CHIEF; *but before his leveled pistols they fall back.*]

PIRATE CHIEF.

Stand back, you dogs! Why throw your lives away?
[*As they fall back one drops a pack of cards;* CHIEF *points to it.*]
See, fate has sent a sign. Pick up the cards.

We'll play, with yonder treasure as the stake;
And he who wins the game shall keep it all.
Do you agree?

PIRATES. Yes, yes!

PIRATE CHIEF. Come, then, begin.

[PIRATES *pick up cards, gather in a group opposite chest and begin to play. As they become absorbed in the game the soft dream music is heard, and the* DREAMS *come from the forest unnoticed by the players. One touches the* PIRATE CHIEF, *who looks up and sees the bubble she holds toward him. Still holding his cards he rises, unnoticed by the others, and reaches for it.*]

PIRATE CHIEF.

My dream! My dream at last within my grasp!

[*As he reaches out to grasp her the* DREAM *draws back.*]

I almost touched you! Do not go so fast!

[*Step by step he follows her into the wood, and out of sight. One by one the other* PIRATES *are led into the woods, out of sight, by the* DREAMS, *the music growing louder, till, when all have gone, the* DREAMS *dance joyfully back and close the chest. As they do so the voices of children are heard singing in the distance, gradually coming nearer; and* DREAMS *look at each other with nods and smiles. As the singers come into sight the* DREAMS *slip into the forest—still in sight of the audience—and watch while the group comes up the center path.*]

BOY.

Sister, this is the place I told you of.

OLDER GIRL.

How lovely!

LITTLE GIRL [*kneeling on the moss*].

Look, oh, look! Such soft green moss!

CHILD.

Is this the fairies' home?

OLDER GIRL [*smiling*]. Perhaps, my dear.
And I am sure they'd like to have us use
Their fine green tablecloth. So come along;
And we will eat our lunch here in the shade.
Suppose some of you try to find a spring.
The rest may play until the feast is spread.

[*Children begin to play "Nuts in May" or some other singing game, while* BOY *and* GIRL *go to R. and L. as if searching for a spring; and* OLDER GIRL *begins to open lunch-basket. Presently the* BOY *finds chest and calls out; the others gather round him.*]

BOY.

Oh, see what I have found!

GIRL. What can it be!

OLDER GIRL [*rises and goes to them*].

What is it, children?

CHILD [*wonderingly*]. Such a pretty chest!

GIRL.

O sister, may we see what is inside?

OLDER GIRL.

I think we may.

[*Opens lid; and all look inside.*]

CHILDREN. Oh!—Ah!—

OLDER GIRL. How wonderful!

CHILD.

Where did it come from, sister?

BOY. Whose is it?

[OLDER GIRL *gathers* CHILDREN *to her. As she speaks they look at one another and occasionally nod as if agreeing with what she says.*]

OLDER GIRL.

Do you remember that old wonder-tale
You used to beg for when your bedtime came?

About the Treasure Chest the Fairies hid
Deep in a shady wood beside the sea;—
And how they filled it full of splendid gifts
For mortals;—but, unless their hearts were true,
The finders could not take it from the place?

CHILDREN.

Yes, yes!

GIRL [*dreamily*].

Dream-fairies kept it safe from harm.

OLDER GIRL [*gently*].

I think we've found the Fairies' Treasure Chest.
[CHILDREN *clap their hands and speak eagerly.*]

BOY.

And can we take it home?

GIRL. O sister, please!
Mother would love it so.

CHILD. And Daddy too.

BOY.

Let's take it to them!

OLDER GIRL. Bless your generous hearts!

GIRL [*thoughtfully*].

The story said "Unless their hearts were true
The finders could not take it from the place."
Do you suppose OUR hearts are true enough?

OLDER GIRL [*smiling*].

Suppose we try.

BOY [*trying to lift end of chest*].

It's pretty hard to lift.

[*As* BOY *puts chest down again fairy music begins; and* DREAMS *dance in circle about the* CHILDREN *and chest, and lifting it, carry it to the center of the stage, the* CHILDREN *following wonderingly. As they advance the* CLOUDS *and* SUNBEAMS, WAVES *and* LEAVES *slip in from both sides and the back and make two groups on either side of the stage. When the Treasure Chest reaches the cen-*

ter of the stage the FOREST- *and* SEA-SPIRITS *appear at back, and, coming forward, take places on the throne; Fairies all kneel.*]

FOREST-SPIRIT.

Mortals rejoice! For when you planned to share
The riches of the Fairies' Treasure Chest
You broke the spell, because your hearts were true;
And you may take the gifts which Miser's greed
Or Pirates' strength were powerless to move.
Lift up the chest. The Dreams shall lead the way;
[CHILDREN *lift chest.*]
And all our happy band will follow you,
Who take the treasure of the Sun and Clouds,
The Sea and Forest back into your homes
To those who cannot come to us themselves.
Mortals and Fairies, with rejoicing come!

[SPIRITS *lift wand and trident. At the signal* DREAMS *surround the* CHILDREN; *and the* LEAVES, WAVES, CLOUDS, *and* SUNBEAMS *make an arch with their branches and spears, scarves, and sea-weed; music begins; and,* DREAMS *leading the way, all glide down center path singing the "Song of Rejoicing."*]

"SONG OF REJOICING"

The treasures of the Forest
  And Sea, the Clouds and Sun,
We take with us rejoicing,
  To share with every one;—
For the Health and Strength and Cheer they give
  Help each one to help the rest;
So we go singing, taking home
  The Fairies' Treasure Chest!

RECESSIONAL

[*The order of the recessional is as follows; or the curtain may fall on the singing group of Children and Fairies.*]

THE DREAMS
BOY and GIRL with Treasure Chest
OLDER GIRL with LITTLE CHILDREN
FOREST- and SEA-SPIRITS (together)
WAVES
CLOUDS
SUNBEAMS
LEAVES
ELVES
PIRATES
MISER

THE CONSPIRACY OF SPRING *

By

MARY S. EDGAR

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CHARACTERS

THE QUEEN, *spring*
ARBUTUS, TRILLIUM, HEPATICA } *maids-in-waiting*
ZEPHYR, *a herald*
FIRST EARTH SPRITE
SECOND EARTH SPRITE
THIRD EARTH SPRITE
ROBIN REDBREAST
BUTTERFLY
RIVULET
BLUE SKY
DAWN
FLOWER FOLK (daisies, wild roses, violets, marigolds)
LITTLE EARTH MORTAL

THE CONSPIRACY OF SPRING

Out of doors. Springtime. At the center-back there is a woodsy throne among ferns and flowers. Three little brown-clad EARTH SPRITES *are lying asleep under white blankets. The orchestra plays Grieg's "Les Oiseaux."* ZEPHYR *comes lightly in, dressed in white with a loose, blue-gray, flowing cape. She blows upon two white, flute-like pipes, making only soft sounds of wind-music; then noticing the sleeping sprites she calls to them:*

ZEPHYR.

Awake! Awake!
Brown Earth Sprites, stir!
The time has come to welcome her;
The Queen, the Queen is on her way.
Arise! Arise and homage pay.

FIRST EARTH SPRITE [*sleepily rubbing his eyes*].

Who said "awake"?
It's early yet;
It's good to sleep
And just forget—
Forget and lie
So still, and keep
Our soft white dreams
And friendly sleep.

SECOND EARTH SPRITE [*sitting up, then snuggling down again*].

Why bid us stir?
We love to lie
Asleep beneath

An arch of sky.
Just wait awhile
And call us then;
But let us go
To sleep again.

ZEPHYR [*impatiently*].

You lazy, lounging, laggard Sprites,
Get up at once! What pleasing sights
You three would make before the Queen:
Make haste, get on your coats of green!
Unless you rise—and hurry too—
The Queen will promptly banish you.

[ZEPHYR *goes out. The* EARTH SPRITES *jump up quickly, rubbing their eyes. Throwing back their heads in a yawn, they stretch their arms out wide. When they open their eyes they show surprise at the broad expanse of blue sky, then scurry around getting on their little green cloaks and tight green caps. Then they perform a grotesque, squat-dance to music, similar to the frog-dance. As the dance comes to an end,* ZEPHYR *reënters.*]

ZEPHYR.

The Queen is come to grace the May,—
Fair Spring is here. Make way! Make way!

[EARTH SPRITES *stand at impish attention, Kewpie fashion. Enter* ARBUTUS *and* HEPATICA *bearing the crown of blossoms on a cushion; then* SPRING, *in a pale green gown, followed by* TRILLIUM *holding her train. The* QUEEN *ascends the throne and places the crown upon her head. The* MAIDS-IN-WAITING *make low bows,* ZEPHYR *a stately bow, and the* EARTH SPRITES *stiff jerky bows, skipping around and kicking up their heels behind them.*]

Song [*to be sung by the* MAIDS-IN-WAITING, *gracefully grouped near the* QUEEN].

Tune: Chorus of "My Wild Irish Rose."

Springtime is Queen!

Fairest ever seen.
You may search everywhere,
But there's none can compare
With our sweet Maytime Queen.
She brings joy to earth
And laughter, love and mirth,
So we'll sing to her praise
All the long sunny days,
All hail to our Queen!

QUEEN.

Again I have returned,
Fair subjects, to hold sway
Over the waking land
Through all the hours of May.
[*To* ZEPHYR.]
Go, send my edict forth
That earth shall homage pay,
Each bird and flower and tree and child,
And each in his own way.
[ZEPHYR *bows low before the* QUEEN *and goes out.* ARBUTUS, HEPATICA, *and* TRILLIUM *bow before the* QUEEN, *each presenting an offering of flowers. The* SPRITES, *in a roguish manner, pick up tiny blades of grass and with exaggerated gallantry present their offering.*]

FIRST SPRITE.

Most worthy and most noble Queen,
Accept this tiny sprig of green;
It may seem quite a little thing,
But very wide's the love I bring.
[*Spreading his arms wide apart he makes an awkward bow with toes turned in.*]

SECOND SPRITE.

My Queen, you hold my heart in thrall,
Accept from me this offering small.
[*Placing a little spray of leaves before her, he bows so low that his head touches the ground, and he top-*

ples over on his side and rises with finger in his mouth.]

THIRD SPRITE [*offering three paltry grass blades, separately*].

Not this, nor this, nor even this,
Can show the love I feel,
And so I blow to you a kiss,
Then on my nose I kneel.

[*Blowing a kiss off the palm of his hand, then putting his nose to the ground, he turns a somersault. Enter* ROBIN REDBREAST, BUTTERFLY, RIVULET, *and* BLUE SKY.]

QUEEN [*as* ROBIN *bows*].

A welcome to you once again,
O Robin, with the red, red breast;
Of all the birds that heed my call
You are the one I love the best.

[*To* BUTTERFLY, *as she runs forward lightly with her wings spread wide out and her face to the sky.*]

And you, with silken rainbow wing,
You've won my heart, you airy thing.

[*To* RIVULET, *who comes forward laughingly, rippling her wavy white gown*].

And here you are, gay Rivulet,
And laughing just as sweetly yet.

[*To* BLUE SKY, *who wears an azure gown*].

And you at last, my dear Blue Sky,
You waft our dreams like fleece-clouds high.
Your smile is always warm and fair,
And radiant are the gowns you wear.

[ROBIN, BUTTERFLY, RIVULET, *and* BLUE SKY *go through a dainty minuet, and the* SPRITES *mimic in foolish fashion.* ZEPHYR *returns.*]

QUEEN.

O Herald, what's the news you bring?
Does all the earth pay court to Spring?

ZEPHYR.

Through all the earth each growing thing
Is paying homage unto Spring.
The woods and meadows, lanes and trees,
Are singing to the friendly breeze
This sweet refrain: "Oh, Spring is Queen.
We'll clothe ourselves in gold and green."
The mating birds on every bough
Are telling forth your praises now;
But, O fair Queen, I scarce can tell
The dim dark things I saw as well;
I entered places, I must own,
Where you are neither loved nor known.

QUEEN.

What do you mean?
Not known as Queen!
Speak, Herald, tell us
What you've seen!
[*All the nature folk show surprise.*]

ZEPHYR.

Your Majesty, I wandered down
Into a dingy, smoky town,
And turned my pavement-tired feet
Along a shadeless, noisy street;
Shrill whistles blew and doors flew wide
And streams of mortals poured outside.
'Twas noon, a scorching, weary hour,
With nowhere sign of blade or flower.
I called my message: "Spring is Queen."
But I was neither heard nor seen.
And as I turned to hurry on,
I passed a child so thin and wan,
So like a drooping flower of spring,
I paused beside the little thing,
And whispered softly: "Spring is Queen."
She slowly answered: "What—you—mean?"

But then the whistles blew once more—
She passed inside the narrow door.

QUEEN.

O Herald, can these things be true!
What shall we ever, *ever* do?
[*Turning to the other subjects*].
Who'll take a message for the Queen
And tell the child what those words mean?
[*Cries of "I, your Majesty" from all.*]

FIRST SPRITE [*stepping forward with arms akimbo*].

Upon my word!
Who ever heard
Such ignorance
In beast or bird!
[SPRITES *get together and plot and plan.*]

QUEEN [*to* ROBIN].

Go, Robin, go on fleetest wing,
Go find the little child and sing,
Sing out your notes so crystal clear,
Until your music lures her here.
[ROBIN *makes a bow and steps backward.*]

QUEEN [*to* RIVULET].

And you, my fair and joyous Brook,
Go laughing into every nook,
Go romping gayly down the street
And call her with your laughter sweet.
[*To* BUTTERFLY.]
And, Butterfly with airy grace,
In gown of filmy gold and lace,
Go fluttering, fluttering to and fro,
Your charm will win her heart, I know.
[*To* BLUE SKY.]
And you, my dear and true Blue Sky,
Smile down upon her from on high;
Your lovely eyes are azure-clear,
Bend over her and draw her near.

[ROBIN, RIVULET, BUTTERFLY, *and* BLUE SKY *take hands and dance off singing.*]

Tune: "Jingle Bells."

Away we go, away we go,
And you will surely see,
That when we all return again
The child with us shall be.

[*Repeat off-stage.*]

SPRITES [*stepping forward in a straight row*].

Your MA-JES-TY!
We are away,
To bring that mortal
Here to-day.

[*They march around, kicking up their heels behind them, singing the following song.*]

Tune: "Marching Through Georgia."

We're the Sprites that serve the Queen
We're Johnny-on-the-spot;
We go where we are wanted
And go where we are not.
We always do just as we please,
And sometimes as we ought,—
And now we are off for adventure!

Chorus:

Hoorah, hoorah, we're off to serve the Queen,
Hoorah, hoorah, we may look very green,
But aren't we just the bravest things
That you have ever seen,
As we go off for adventure?

[*They repeat chorus as they troop off stage. The* QUEEN *sits thinking, resting her head on her hands.* ARBUTUS, HEPATICA, *and* TRILLIUM *take garlands and form tableau; then dance to the following song.*]

Tune: "The Slumber Boat."

1

Over hill and over dale
Through the fragrant air,
Goes the message of our Queen,
Hear it everywhere:

Chorus:

Springtime is come
With the birds and flowers,
Welcome her to Earth again,
And her radiant hours.

2

On the breeze and down the stream,
Goes the message sweet,
Pay your homage to the Queen,
Kneeling at her feet.

Chorus.

[*The three* SPRITES *come running in, holding their noses, and throw themselves on the ground on their backs.*

QUEEN [*in astonishment*].

What! My brave adventurers back again?
You seem in need of oxygen.

FIRST SPRITE [*getting up, but still holding his nose*].

Smoke and smells!
Smells and smoke!
Enough to murder
Your Nature Folk.

SECOND SPRITE [*holding his fingers in his ears*].

Wheels and whistles!
Whistles and wheels!
Nothing but noises
And squeaks and squeals!

THIRD SPRITE [*holding his hands in front of his eyes*].

Brick and blocks!
Blocks and brick!
Your Majesty,
I feel quite sick.

[SPRITES *stagger to the ground and stretch themselves out.*]

QUEEN.

My poor Earth Sprites, you're scarce alive,
Lie still awhile and you'll revive.

[ROBIN, BUTTERFLY, RIVULET, *and* BLUE SKY *come straggling in, looking very dejected and bedraggled.*]

QUEEN.

But here comes Robin and Butterfly.
What cheer have you in your reply?

ROBIN.

Your Majesty, I bring you word
My message was not even heard.
Above the noise, my feeble throat
Could never sound its sweetest note.

BUTTERFLY [*coming forward with drooping wings*].

My lovely wings are drooping down,
O Queen, I hate that horrid town!
I fluttered here, I fluttered there,
But could not find her anywhere.

RIVULET [*coming forward all muddy*].

O Queen, I laughed my gay refrain,
But I was hurried down a drain.

BLUE SKY.

Such clouds of smoke blew in my face
It soiled my gown and filmy lace.
I tried to smile and beckon, too,
But the town is roofed, and you can't see through.
The child we seek is imprisoned fast.
Alas! I greatly fear, O Queen,
That not one messenger was seen.

QUEEN.

Is there nothing at all that we can do?
My loyal subjects, I turn to you.
In all my kingdom, is there none
Who can reach this toiling little one?
I have won the allegiance of all that is wild,
But the homage I seek is the love of a child.

[*The* SPRITES *step forward and offer their solutions with great solemnity and imposing gestures.*]

FIRST SPRITE.

With the mightiest
Of your spells,
Drive away
All evil smells!

SECOND SPRITE.

Call forth lightnings,
Earthquakes, rain,
Banish cities
Once again!

THIRD SPRITE.

Capture every Grown-up-one
Who robs a child of the friendly sun;
Turn them into frogs and snakes,
And banish them to the deepest lakes!

QUEEN.

All this is quite beyond my power,
I must win by the spell of a joy or a flower.
In all my kingdom far and wide
Is there none could win if he really tried?

BLUE SKY [*coming forward and bowing before the* QUEEN].

Your Majesty, I know the one
By whom this thing can best be done,
It is my lovely sister Dawn—
The rosy-colored, laughing Dawn.
She fares abroad at early morn
Before the cares of earth are born;
The toiling child she runs to meet,

Surprising her with radiance sweet.
Only the Dawn, of all things fair,
Can speak your message clearly there.

QUEEN.

Oh, 'tis good those words to hear.
Herald, go! Bid Dawn appear!

[ZEPHYR *goes out, and almost immediately* DAWN, *in lovely rose-colored gown, comes dancing in, joyously laughing and tossing rose petals before her. All the* NATURE FOLK *join in the following song.*]

Tune: "Memories."

Welcome Dawn, welcome Dawn,
Child of radiant Morn.
When you light the eastern skies
We know that Hope is born;
Welcome Dawn, Welcome Dawn,
We sing our love to you,
We wish you could stay
Throughout the long day,
But we know there are tasks to do.

QUEEN.

Dawn, in answer to my call
You have come. I'll tell you all.
I sent my edict forth to-day
That everything should homage pay
To me, as reigning Queen of Spring;
But Zephyr found a little thing—
A little toiling indoor mite
Who works from early morn till night—
Who could not understand a word
Of all the message that she heard.
I then sent forth my Nature Folk,
But they came back o'erpowered with smoke;
And now we ask that you will go
And speak this message soft and low:
"The Spring is Queen! Oh, come away,
Come, follow me and homage pay."

DAWN [*with tender feeling*].

Over the slowly waking town
I will scatter my rose-pink petals down;
I will call to her in the hush of morn
Ere yet another day is born.
I will woo the heart of the city child
With a tender smile and a blush beguiled,
I will greet her gently at break of day,
And then I will lure her off and away.

[DAWN *goes out and the* SPRITES *follow her to the exit, peering after her excitedly. The* QUEEN *sits with her head resting on her hands, looking very sad. Her* MAIDS-IN-WAITING *are very attentive to her but are looking troubled also.*]

QUEEN.

Nothing can make me happy now,
Unless this plan succeeds somehow.
[*She clasps her hands and exclaims suddenly*].
Oh, why should such things ever be?
All child life should be glad and free.

[*The* FLOWER FOLK *come trooping in singing as they twine garlands of flowers. They enter in couples, swinging their garlands between them, and they wear their own colors:* DAISIES *in white,* ROSES *in pink,* VIOLETS *in mauve,* MARIGOLDS *in gold.*]

Tune: Chorus of "Come Back to Erin."

Down from the hillsides,
Dew-pearled and shining,
Up from the fields where the world's clad in green
We come with our garlands
Of flowers entwining,
Offering homage and love to our Queen.

[SPRITES *point fingers of scorn at them.*]

FIRST SPRITE.

Hi there! You're late.

SECOND SPRITE.

You've been sleeping too sound.

THIRD SPRITE.

I s'pose it's just now you've peeked from the ground.

ROSE.

I had to get ready this pretty new dress.

MARIGOLD.

And we look a sight better than you do, I guess.

VIOLET.

We came just as soon as we heard Zephyr call.

DAISY.

And we've probably done more than *you've* done after all.

FIRST SPRITE.

Oh, ho! did you hear
Those saucy Flower Folk:
"Done more than we've done!"
I call that a joke.

SECOND SPRITE.

We had a commission—
Imperiled our lives,
In fact it's a marvel
That any survives.

THIRD SPRITE [*picking up three flat stones*].

See, these are the medals
We got from the Queen;
If we were as lazy as you, we'd feel mean.

DAISY.

I'd like to box their saucy ears.

VIOLET.

Don't deign to notice them, my dears.

[*The* QUEEN *scarcely notices the* FLOWER FOLK. *One of the* MAIDS-IN-WAITING *is wiping her eyes, while another fans her, and the third kneels at her feet.* ZEPHYR *steps forward with hands raised for silence.*]

ZEPHYR.

The Queen is sad at heart to-day
And in no mood to watch your play.

[FLOWER FOLK *crowd around* ZEPHYR.]

DAISY.
Sad at heart?
MARIGOLD. To-day?
ROSE. And why?
VIOLET.
Oh, dear! I believe I see her cry.
ROSE.
Come, Zephyr, tell us what is wrong.
DAISY.
She never even heard our song.
MARIGOLD.
Look at Robin and Butterfly!
VIOLET.
And Rivulet and dear Blue Sky!
DAISY.
They look so very, very sad—
Have you had news that's very bad?
ZEPHYR.
Alas! This day a child was seen
Who did not know that Spring was Queen,
And worse than that, we do not know
How we can ever prove 'tis so.
DAISY.
Come, let us coax her out to play
A-ring-a-rosy, see—this way.
[*She attempts to form a circle.*]
ZEPHYR.
Now listen. *You* could not get near
To coax her out, or make her hear,
For each of us has tried her best
And every one returned distressed.
Dawn was sent forth some time ago—
With what success we do not know.
QUEEN [*anxiously*].
Has no word come as yet from Dawn?
It seems an age that she was gone.
Robin, Rivulet, and Butterfly,

Go out to meet her—and you, Blue Sky.

[*They go out, and the* SPRITES *step forward and address the* QUEEN.]

FIRST SPRITE.

Your Majesty, we three will stay
To keep all enemies away.

SECOND SPRITE.

"Hands up! Heads off!" You'll hear us cry
If anything comes sneaking by.

THIRD SPRITE.

To arms! Mark time and forward go!
No quarter for the desperate foe!

[*They "shoulder arms," which are bent branches, and march soldier-fashion to the exit; then whisper excitedly.*]

FIRST SPRITE.

She's coming.

SECOND SPRITE.

Dawn's got her, tight by the hand.

THIRD SPRITE.

A scared-looking mortal
From Smoke-and-Smell Land.

QUEEN.

Are you sure? Can you see? Are they coming this way?
Is Dawn holding the hand of the child, did you say?

FIRST SPRITE.

Yes! My word—yes!
But she's not much to see,
She's as plain as a stump
And homely as can be.

QUEEN.

Silence, my Sprites! If she is a child
She's more precious than gold
And all that is wild.

SPRITES [*beckoning with their arms*].

This way to the Queen!

This way! This way!
Here is the gate,
And it's here that you pay!
[DAWN *comes in holding the hand of a very plainly dressed little* EARTH MORTAL, *who is shyly lagging behind. The* SPRITES *stick up their faces to be kissed as they pass.*]

SPRITES.

It's here that you pay!
It's here that you pay!
[*The child draws back from them timidly and hides behind* DAWN.]

DAWN.

Now, dear, I must leave you here at the gate;
I've a long way to go, and I must not be late.

EARTH MORTAL.

Oh, stay! Please do stay!
You're the one that I know,
I'll be so alone
If you have to go.
I don't know these others
[*Pointing at* FLOWERS *and* NATURE FOLK.]
And these are so bold.
[*Pointing at the* SPRITES.]
I feel sort of safe
When there's your hand to hold.

DAWN.

But listen, child, here's dear Blue Sky,
My lovely sister, so, good-bye!
[*She whispers a word to the* QUEEN *and disappears.* BLUE SKY *comes forward to take the child's hand, but she draws back.*]

EARTH MORTAL.

You don't look like the one I know.
Oh, dear! I wish Dawn wouldn't go!

[*The child half hides behind a little shrub. The two* DAISIES *go over towards her and gently take her hands and she smiles at them.*]

EARTH MORTAL.

I think I've seen you two before—
Perhaps 'twas in the flower-store.

FIRST DAISY.

Come and play with our sister-flowers.

SECOND DAISY.

You've never played such a game as ours.

[*They lead her out and form a circle, and one* DAISY *goes around the outside swinging her garland and singing.*]

Tune: "I Sent a Letter to My Love."

I made a garland for my love
And now I have to find her,
And so I seek her everywhere
And drop my wreath behind her.
Oh, it's not for you,
And it's not for you,
And it's not for you, etc.
But it's for you.

[*She drops her flowers behind the* EARTH MORTAL *and they all gather laughingly around her.* DAISY *loosens her curly hair and places the wreath on her head. They form a circle again with the* CHILD *in the center. This time all the* NATURE FOLK *and* SPRITES *join in, and they go around singing:*

Tune: "The Farmer in the Dell."

The Fairy's in the ring,
The Fairy's in the ring,
Tra la la lario,
The Fairy's in the ring.
The Fairy takes a Fay, etc.
The Fay takes a Sprite, etc.

The Sprite takes an Elf, etc.
The Elf takes a charm, etc.
The Fairy wears the charm, etc.

[*Those in the center drop back into the circle, and the "Charm" puts her two arms about the child's neck and kisses her. The* EARTH MORTAL *laughs merrily.*]

EARTH MORTAL.

Why, that's a lovely, lovely game!
I'm awfully, *awfully* glad I came!

[*Then she suddenly sees the* QUEEN *and gazes for a moment in silent admiration. The* FLOWER FOLK *drop back and the child rushes forward and kneels at the* QUEEN'S *feet.*]

EARTH MORTAL.

I never, *never* saw anything
As beautiful as you, O Spring!

[*To the music of Bohn's "Dance of the Sprites," the* FLOWER FOLK *gather about the* EARTH MORTAL, *coaxing her to join their dance. She does so, at first shyly and reluctantly, but as the* FLOWER FOLK *are joined by the* SPRITES, ZEPHYR, BLUE SKY, RIVULET, BUTTERFLY, *and* ROBIN REDBREAST *she grows in freedom of response to their appeal and to the music, until all, led by* SPRING, *become a whirling joyous revel and dance away out of sight.*]

[CURTAIN]

THE SNOW QUEEN *

A FAIRY PLAY FOR CHILDREN IN TWO ACTS

Dramatized from Hans Christian Andersen's Story

By

ELIZABETH B. GRIMBALL

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CHARACTERS

The Snow Queen
The Bad Goblin
Little Goblins
Snow-flakes
Gerda
Kay
Village Children
The Crow
The Flowers
The Witch
Robber Girl
Little Robbers
The Angels
The Icicles

THE SNOW QUEEN

ACT I

"Look out now, we are going to begin!"—*Andersen.*

Time—Winter.
Place—The Kingdom of Youth.

Scene I

The Cave of the Bad Goblin

The Curtain rises on a dim stage, the only light coming from a fire of green and red flames over which the Bad Goblin *crouches. He stirs the contents of a caldron with a pitchfork. Grouped about the* Bad Goblin *are the* Little Goblins *in various grotesque attitudes all with their mouths wide open. The Curtain rises to Anitra's Dance from the Peer Gynt Suite, accompanied by howls from the demons. For some seconds the* Little Goblins *dance about fire, wailing and brandishing their arms. Then the* Bad Goblin *steps forward and waves his pitchfork.*]

Bad Goblin. G-r-r-r-h'. S-h-h-h'. Hither, little Demons! Come hither. 'Tis time again for school, my Goblin School. You must learn to howl much louder if you would fright the silly folk on earth. Try again. Now all together.

Bad Goblin and Little Goblins.

Toil and moil!
Moil and toil!
Soon 'twill boil!
The bubbling oil!

'Tis cold and hot
'Twill please you not
What's in this pot
'Tis best forgot
U-g-g-h! G-r-r-h!

[*Through this should be played softly the Anitra's Dance music while the* LITTLE GOBLINS *in a row before the* BAD GOBLIN *take various grotesque attitudes.*]

BAD GOBLIN. Work, Little Demons! Blow hard on the flames. Soon the feast will be ready, but not for you. None but drippings until another Magic Mirror is made. Ye lazy rascals, 'twas your carelessness that let it break. [*The* LITTLE DEMONS *shrink away as he brandishes the pitchfork, whining and wailing as they tumble about the stage. Flood stage with red light.*]

BAD GOBLIN. Begone! Get you to work. Scrape and scratch, rub till smooth! U-g-g-h! G-r-r-h! 'Twill not be so hard methinks to make one e'en better than the old mirror. And [*rubbing his hands in fiendish glee*] once again we shall see how the good people in the World really look! He-he-he! [*Loud moans and groans and weird wailing are heard from the outside.*]

BAD GOBLIN. He-he-he-he! Hear the foolish folk. How they groan all because of my Magic Mirror! [*Laughs and rubs his hands and dances about the fire.*] How we worked, I and my Little Goblins! [*Laughs and dances as before.*] Such a Mirror! Colder than the North Pole! No mist could form on its hard surface to dim the bitter truth. Ha-ha-ha-ha! He-he-he! When any one looked into its shimmering depths, if there was hidden away the tiniest unkind thought deep in his heart, it could be plainly seen in my mirror. And no matter how pure and tender a wish were there, not even the keenest eye could find it! Ha-ha-ha! How I laughed to see! E'en the Angels were afraid and struck at it. Alas! [*He grows very angry and*

the thunder rolls and the LITTLE GOBLINS *wail and moan, throwing themselves about.*] Alas! they guided a boy's hand and he threw a snowball far, far into the air. It struck my mirror while my Demons were carrying it up to the Angels and broke the precious glass. [*All wail.*] But I will be revenged. I will call on the power of cold to destroy this mortal, unyielding cold and bitter frost. [*Softly sounds the music. Use a few strains of "Träumerei" played very smoothly. In a glow of white light appears a lovely figure. She is dressed in a cloak of glistening white and wears a hood drawn over her face. She carries a white staff in her hand. From it hang glistening streamers which shine and shimmer. At the sight of her the Demons stop wailing. The* BAD GOBLIN *comes forward bowing low.*]

BAD GOBLIN. Welcome to our cave, Fair Stranger. Who art thou?

SNOW QUEEN [*stepping to center*]. I am the Snow Queen, Empress of the Kingdom of Winter. I reign over all the North winds. The icicles are my vassals loyal. Mother Carey's chicks fill my barn yard. My palace walls are crystals bright. Soft snow-banks form a couch for me. The gleaming lamps of the North light no Kingdom as beautiful as mine. [*She pauses as if to challenge denial.*]

BAD GOBLIN. 'Tis true, O Queen! But you seem sad!

SNOW QUEEN. Alas! I am so lonely! 'Tis true the baby bears are my toys, but I long for a little human playmate. All mortals fly away from me. At first they welcome me with shouts and songs but soon they grow pale and cold and fly from my side to seek my enemy, fire. I dare not follow them. Is there no charm, O Demon, you can give me to make the children stay with me? I am so lonely! [*She hides her face in her hands as if in grief.*]

BAD GOBLIN. He-he-he-he! I have it! There is a boy, O Queen! The very one to be your little page. A daring boy; and I know he loves you and your Kingdom, but his

human heart makes a coward of him. Yet I might drive a splinter from my Magic Mirror in his breast—then he'd be yours forever.

SNOW QUEEN. That would kill him. Alas, my cold kills all the children if it reaches the heart. I want my playmate to live always at my side!

BAD GOBLIN. No, your Majesty, it would not kill him. 'Twould freeze forever from his heart all human love. He would never long for Summer days. [*The* QUEEN *smiles.*] He would laugh with glee when your icicles hung from the rose trees. He would love none but you. He-he-he! [*All the* LITTLE GOBLINS *laugh with him.*]

SNOW QUEEN. O bring him to me! The half my Kingdom will I give you.

BAD GOBLIN. Only one boon I ask thee, O Queen!

SNOW QUEEN. Speak! I will do much!

BAD GOBLIN. 'Tis this, O Queen. Whene'er the snow falls and the feathery wings of your white birds drop their down, let me mix the crystals of my broken mirror in it. Then ever and again some laughing mortal may be struck and pierced with a splinter of that glass. All love will die from his heart and never again will he see beauty in aught but winter days. Soon you will have many playmates who will hate the warm light of summer and cannot love each other. Ha-ha-ha-ha! He-he-he-he! The sweet revenge! [*Thunder and lightning and wailing of* GOBLINS.] And look you, Queen, watch near the Earth and perchance you may take your page away to-day.

SNOW QUEEN. My gracious thanks to you, Bad Goblin, but 'tis not God's will that all sunshine die forever from the Earth, so I decree [*She waves her staff.*] that the cruel spell may always be broken by the tears of a loving maiden, who can make her way into the Kingdom of Ice by the help of her tender heart and the Wise Old Crow. [*The music is repeated as she steps back and the light fades away.*]

BAD GOBLIN. Ho, Little Goblins, let us rejoice. We are revenged. [*He leads the* LITTLE GOBLINS *into a dance—a*

sort of Indian War dance. He then leads them to the front of the stage and they all chant together.]

ALL.

Hear ye Angels bright, above,
He-he-he-he!
All light will fly
He-he-he-he!
All love will die!
The Magic Mirror's power abides
And everywhere a splinter hides
To pierce the heart of all who love!

[*At the end of the chant they dance twice around the stage to the "Tam O'Shanter" music. While the* LITTLE GOBLINS *dance, the* BAD GOBLIN *leads them with his pitchfork, keeping time and dancing about as he laughs and chuckles. He picks up handfuls of the broken Mirror and scatters them far and wide.*]

BAD GOBLIN.

Fly, fly everywhere, little splinters,
Strike deep into the merry hearts
Of the children as they play,
And give revenge, revenge to me!
Ha-ha-ha! He-he-he!

[*The stage becomes quite dark. The music fainter and fainter. The laughter of the* GOBLINS *more distant as the Curtain falls.*]

[END OF SCENE I]

SCENE II

Time—An Afternoon in Winter.
Place—A Village Street.

KAY *goes to dwell in the palace of the* SNOW QUEEN

For incidental music use a Swedish Folk Dance for the rise of the curtain. Full amber light. From all sides children run on. Some draw sleds after them. Some are throwing snowballs. It is snowing. The children are dressed in winter clothes. They shout and call to each other. The children clasp hands as they meet and form a circle, dancing their native dances. The first girl breaks away and claps her hands as the dance finishes.]

FIRST GIRL. Now if we all wish hard, perhaps the Snow Queen will send her Snow-birds to play with us!

CHILDREN. Hurrah, hurrah!

FIRST BOY. Let's all call her together!

ALL. Snow Queen, Snow Queen, Snow Queen!

FIRST GIRL. She lives too far away to hear us. Don't you know she only comes near the earth when the sun does not shine.

ALL. Away, far away in the cold North, there lives the Snow Queen. She is so fair and so cold that no one can look at her without having their eyes blinded by her shining face.

CHILDREN. Oh, have you seen her?

FIRST GIRL. No, but my Mother told me that when the snow falls if you wish hard and look long you will see the flakes grow larger and larger, and at last for a moment you may see her.

FIRST BOY. How can we know her?

FIRST GIRL. She is beautiful they say, all dressed in shining white. She flies here and there with her Flakes to make the world look white, and while you look she fades away and leaves the snow behind!

CHILDREN. Oh, call her for us!

FIRST GIRL. We must all call together. [*She holds her hands as if pleading. The children group themselves around her and they all sway and chant slowly.*]

ALL.

Snow Queen, Snow Queen, come to us, we pray!
Snow Queen, Snow Queen, send your Chicks to-day.
Make the world all white and fair,
Snow birds flying in the air,
Snow Queen, Snow Queen, come to us, we pray!

[*They pause and listen.*]

FIRST GIRL. Let us play. She is very shy and she will not come if we watch.

FIRST BOY. She will send her Snow-birds first. They fly over the woods and lakes, and the cold wind roars around them. They flap their wings and fly close to the earth like this. [*He waves his arms and dances about the stage, followed by the other children.*]

FIRST GIRL. Let us call Kay and Gerda. Perhaps they can make the Queen come. [*They all run across the stage calling.*]

ALL. Gerda! Kay! Come out and play! [*A boy and girl run out laughing and shouting.*]

FIRST GIRL. O Gerda, help us wish for the Snow Queen!

CHILDREN [*jumping up and down*]. Yes, we will all say again—Snow Queen, Snow Queen, send your Snow-birds down!

GERDA. Sh-h-h! She may hear you. My Grandmother says that once the Snow Queen touches a child it will never be warm again. If she comes too near you she will put her hand on you and then you will become a snow-flake.

KAY. Oh, I would like to see her. She couldn't make me go with her. [*The* SNOW QUEEN *music sounds softly and the* QUEEN *steals on. She waves her wand. It begins to snow. If it is not possible to have the snow the two attendants of the* QUEEN *scatter white confetti, dancing about.*]

CHILDREN. Hurrah, hurrah, it snows at last! [*The lights return but the* QUEEN *stands hidden in the background.*]

GERDA. O Kay, the snow-flakes are like white bees swarming!

KAY. Let us catch some! Perhaps the Queen will come now to play with us.

FIRST GIRL. Yes, perhaps she will. Call her.

GERDA. She will not stay. She flies everywhere with her Snow-birds.

KAY. Yes, but sometimes she stops to look in at your window. She blows on the panes and then frozen flowers grow there!

CHILDREN Can the Queen come in our houses and blow on us?

KAY [*bravely*]. Oh, she won't really come, but if she does I'll put her on my stove and melt her up.

CHILDREN. Oh, we are not afraid. See the snow is falling everywhere. [*They clasp hands, singing. The little Snow-flakes dance on across the stage, throwing the white confetti as they whirl.*]

ALL.

THE SNOW SONG

Hurray, hurray, the Snow!
Dancing in the air!
How the white flakes blow
Merrily here and there.
Flutter, flutter, fairy flakes,
Flying up so high.
Flutter, flutter, fairy flakes,
Hiding all the sky.

Oh! see it gayly whirl
Like bits of thistledown.
Watch it madly swirl
Over all the town!
Flutter, flutter, fairy flakes,
Drifting now so low.
Flutter, flutter, fairy flakes,
As you come and go!

[*The music is repeated while the children dance and shout, forming a circle around* KAY *and* GERDA *as she reaches after the falling snow.*]

GERDA [*after the song*]. Oh, let us catch the Snow-flakes. See, Kay, one is coming straight to you. [*During this speech the* SNOW QUEEN *appears at the back of the stage again. She does not wear her cloak, but is in a gown of shiny white, a crown of sparkling crystals on her head. She carries her staff as before. Her music is softly played. She waves her staff, pointing it at* KAY. *The children do not see her.* KAY *stops dancing and presses his hand to his heart, crying:*]

KAY. Oh, see it is a white dart! O-o-o-o! It struck my heart! How cold I am!

GERDA. It grows too cold to play. Come, let us go in. Grandmother says the ice fairies fear the fire. [*Softly the* QUEEN *steals on again followed by her* SNOW-FLAKES *fluttering about her. The music is soft and weird. She still waves her staff at* KAY.]

KAY [*pushing* GERDA *away*]. No, no, I will not go, I am not cold now. I do not like your warm hands in mine, I like the cool snow-flakes better. Your red cheeks are so ugly!

GERDA [*crying*]. How strange you seem, Kay, come with me!

KAY [*turning*]. See the Snow Queen! [*The children shrink back and cry.* GERDA *runs off followed by the others.* KAY *stands staring at the* QUEEN *who advances towards him, her* SNOW-FLAKES *dancing about her. She stretches out her arms to him, singing. Play the air of her song softly. Have no footlights or very dim lights. A bright spot on the* QUEEN *and her* SNOW-FLAKES.]

SNOW QUEEN.

Fairest of mortals, vassals await
To welcome thee to a Royal estate,
Forever to reign in my Kingdom of Cold,
Where the Icicles' glow is much brighter than gold,
Where the Icicles' glow is much brighter than gold.

Oh, lovely boy, thou must fly with me!
A charm and a spell I have laid on thee.
My Snow-birds so swiftly will lead us in flight
Away, far away, to my Ice Palace bright,
Away, far away, to my Ice Palace bright!

[*During the song* KAY *draws nearer and nearer. The* SNOW-FLAKES *surround him.*]

KAY. Who are you? Are you really the Snow Queen?

SNOW QUEEN. Come, I will take you on my swift sleigh, and we will go far away to my lovely Palace of Ice!

KAY [*doubtfully drawing away*]. I am going to find the others and play with them.

SNOW QUEEN [*drawing nearer, while the music of her song is played softly*]. Have no fear. We shall drive fast and well and soon reach my castle gates where the White Bears wait to play with you.

KAY [*eagerly*]. Can the White Bears draw my sled?

SNOW QUEEN. Yes, lovely boy, and you can play the game of Cold Reason with the Icicles. There are many Icicles. Can you count?

KAY [*proudly*]. I can say the multiplication tables, but I never counted icicles.

SNOW QUEEN. Ah, well, my Snow-birds will teach you to tell the Stars in the cold sky and count the swinging lights over my palace walls.

KAY [*drawing away*]. I am so cold. I will go to Grandmother's warm fire.

SNOW QUEEN. No, come with me. Do not shiver so. [*Takes his hand and drawing him to her kisses him on the brow.*] No fire can warm thee now! [KAY *draws away and struggles to pull his hand from hers. He breaks away. The* QUEEN *waves her wand as the music starts. For this use part of the* SNOW-FLAKES *dance music.*]

SNOW QUEEN. Ho! Snow-flakes! Ho! Chicks! Flutter with thy white wings. Bind him fast and bring him to my Royal Sleigh. [*The* SNOW-FLAKES *begin to dance and*

flutter all around KAY. *They wind their snow wreaths about his body and lead him toward the exit.*]

SNOW QUEEN. And look you! Some remain. Confuse the maid who will try to follow. Keep her with your white enchantment. I fly on clouds of night. The boy is mine. Away! [*Some of the* SNOW-FLAKES *hurry away while others turn and whirl to meet* GERDA, *who comes running on the stage. They surround her as she calls out.*]

GERDA. Kay! Kay! Oh, the Snow Queen has stolen him! Oh, let me by. I will find him.

CHILDREN [*following her*]. He won't come back. She will keep him always at her side. Oh, Kay is lost. He is lost!

GERDA [*crying*]. I will follow to the castle gates. Come all! [*As* GERDA *tries to leave the stage the* SNOW-FLAKES *catch her, throwing their wreaths over her head and pulling her back. Have the Dance of the* SNOW-FLAKES *here. It should be worked out so that they constantly prevent* GERDA *from leaving. Finally she breaks away and runs off crying out. During the dance the children are driven into the cottage by the* FLAKES.]

GERDA [*breaking away*]. Oh, I cannot see. They blind my eyes! Kay, I come to find you. Kay! Kay! [*As she runs, followed by the* SNOW-FLAKES, *the curtain should fall before they are all off so that the dance continues as it comes down. Flood stage with blue light as Snow Dance begins.*

[END OF ACT I]

ACT II

SCENE I

Place—The Enchanted Wood.

"And little GERDA *ran out into the wide world."*

Use a magenta light, if possible, and change lights during scene. The curtain rises to soft music, the "Lullaby from Jocelyn," by Godard. GERDA *is discovered asleep near some trees. She is without her hood and coat. Standing around her are the* FOREST FLOWERS. *Quite near, opposite, is the* WISE OLD CROW. *He is watching her while she sleeps. As the curtain rises the* FLOWERS *all sway and chant together.*]

FLOWERS. Kling-klang! Kling-klang! Kling-klang!

CROW. Sh-h-h-h! She sleeps still. Do not wake her. She dreams now of her lost playmate.

A ROSE. The Maiden dreams of sad days.

A LILY. Let us sway softly and waft our fragrance over her.

BLUE-BELL. We will ring out bells for her.

ALL [*swaying*]. Kling-klang! Kling-klang! Kling-klang!

GERDA [*waking*]. Oh! the bells are tolling for Kay. Kay is dead. Kay is dead! [*She covers her face with her hands.*]

CROW [*hopping near*]. Krah! Krah! Good day! Good day!

GERDA [*springing to her feet*]. Who are you? What a strange voice!

CROW. Krah! Krah! Can you speak the crow language?

FLOWERS. Kling-klang! Kling-klang!

GERDA [*interrupting*]. Oh, do stop that tolling for little Kay.

BLUE-BELL. We are not tolling for little Kay. We only sing our song. Kling-klang. Kling-klang!

GERDA [*to* CROW]. Can't you tell me? You look so wise.

CROW [*nodding his head wisely and hopping about*]. Krah! Krah! Yes, I am the Wise Old Crow!

GERDA. Dear Crow—

CROW [*interrupting*]. Krah! Krah! Can't you under-

stand the Crow language either? [GERDA *shakes her head.*] Ah, well, perhaps we can get along by signs. [*He dances about with grotesque steps.*] Krah! Krah! Why are you here all alone, little girl?

GERDA. I seek Kay, my little Playmate. I ran from the Snow-flakes and then—[*as if dazed*] I can't remember—I fell asleep and—[*looking about her*] Why, where is my cloak and hood—where am I?

A ROSE. Lovely Maiden, you are in the enchanted wood. There is neither night nor day here. There is no time at all. We perfume the breezes and sing out songs. Kling-klang! Kling-klang!

GERDA. O roses, have you seen Kay? Is he dead?

ROSE. No, we have been in the ground where the dear dead sleep. He is not there.

GERDA. Thank you, roses! [*Turning to the* HYACINTHS.] O Hyacinths, do you know where little Kay is?

HYACINTHS. We cannot tell. It is sweet and fragrant here. That is all our song. Kling-klang!

GERDA. Ah, is little Kay really gone? The Hyacinths seem to toll for him.

BUTTERCUP. I do not know. I only know myself. See how I can point my toes. [*Takes a dancing attitude.*] I am only a little dancing flower on my stalk. I know nothing of Kay! [*Dances a few steps prettily, pointing her toes, followed by the other flowers, who imitate her.*]

GERDA [*sadly*]. Oh, dear! There's no use my asking the flowers. They only know their own songs.

CROW. Krah! Krah! She forgets that I am here—I—the Wise Old Crow!

GERDA [*running to him*]. Perhaps you know. The Roses say he is still alive.

CROW [*hopping about with delight*]. I knew it. Krah! Krah!

GERDA. Crow, dear! Have you seen Kay?

CROW. That may be! That may be!

GERDA [*rushing to him and putting her arms around*

him]. Oh, do tell me! Where? O-o-o-h! [*Squeezing his neck.*]

CROW [*pulling away*]. Gently, gently! You will hurt my "Caw." [*He feels his throat.*] I think you have squeezed all the high notes out now! [*With mouth wide open he tries to caw, and after an awful effort he makes a hoarse sound. The* FLOWERS *all draw away, fluttering with fright.* GERDA *jumps aside, clapping her hands over her ears.*]

GERDA. Ow, what a noise! You have frightened all the Flowers.

CROW. Oh, never mind the silly things, they have no stamina. Krah! Krah! [*Hops up and down in glee.*] But little Kay—why, they say he has married the happy Princess!

GERDA. O Crow, are you sure?

CROW [*nodding his head*]. Krah! I wish you had learned the Crow language—but perhaps I'll sing. You won't mind much. My voice is not so bad in this song.

GERDA. Oh, go on. If it gets too bad, I'll put my hands over my ears again.

CROW [*striking an attitude*].

Krah! Krah! Krah!
A Princess fair sat on her throne
Krah! Krah! Krah!
So rich was she, but all alone
Krah! Krah! Krah!
And so she said, "I'll marry yet,
A husband for myself I'll get."
Krah! Krah! Krah!

And—

GERDA [*interrupting*]. There, thank you. That will do. Oh, I am so happy to hear of Kay. I must dance for joy. [*Here introduce* GERDA'S *Dance of Joy.* GERDA *whirls to the center with the* FLOWERS *grouped around her in a semi-circle. They all sway in time to the music. They have been swaying softly during the conversation. All during*

the dance they flutter and sway. The CROW *should stand a little up stage, watching* GERDA'S *dance. At the end she swirls over to him and takes him by the wing and dances to the footlights with him.*]

GERDA. O Crow, hurry and tell us about Kay!

CROW. Well, he has certainly forgotten you with the Princess!

GERDA. Does he stay with the Princess?

CROW. Krah! Krah! You see, she was lonely sitting on her throne.

GERDA. Does she sit there all the time? How nice!

CROW [*shaking his head wisely*]. No, it is not as pleasant as it is generally supposed to be. Krah! Krah! "Oh, dear," said she, "I will marry."

GERDA [*impatiently*]. But how do you know all this?

CROW. Oh, my tame sweetheart lives at the Castle, and she told me—but Krah! Krah!—it is a long story, you had best all sit down. [GERDA *and the* FLOWERS *seat themselves. The* FLOWERS *sway.*]

FLOWERS. Kling-klang! Kling-klang!

GERDA [*holding up her finger*]. Sh-h-h! The Crow is going to tell us about Kay. Go on, Crow.

CROW [*taking an attitude in the center and clearing his throat*]. Krah! And—so—the Princess had it published in the newspapers. You should have seen them—with a border of hearts and the Princess's initials—Kr-a-a-h! [*With satisfaction.*] And there you could read that the Princess wished a husband. One who could answer when spoken to. Not one who only stood and looked handsome. That would be wearisome. They came in crowds.

GERDA. But Kay, little Kay? Was he among the crowds?

CROW [*displeased*]. Wait—wait! We are just coming to him. It was on the third day that a little personage came quite merrily to the Castle. His eyes sparkled like yours—but his clothes were shabby.

GERDA [*jumping up and clapping her hands*]. That was Kay! Oh, I have found him!

FLOWERS. Kling-klang! Ring joy-bells for Kay!

CROW. Krah! That may be! That may be! They say his boots creaked noisily on the stairs, but—

GERDA [*in great excitement*]. That was certainly Kay! He had on new boots, and they creaked in Grandmother's room! But where was the sleigh?

CROW. There was no sleigh. He came on foot.

GERDA. No, no! It cannot be! He went away on the Snow Queen's Sleigh. Oh, it is not Kay, and I must look for him again. Oh! oh! [*She cries.*]

CROW [*patting her on the back*]. There, there. We will go on! I shall guide you. Krah! Krah! Come! [*They turn to go.*]

GERDA [*holding back*]. I am frightened. Hear the wind rushing by. I feel as if some one were following us.

CROW [*pulling*]. Oh, they are only dreams. They always come before you sleep here! If we walk fast we may catch up with the one about where Kay is! [*They start again, followed by the* FLOWERS, *but are stopped by the entrance of the* WITCH, *who comes prowling in on a broomstick. She is followed by the* ROBBER GIRL *and the* LITTLE ROBBERS. *She circles around the stage to the Hansel and Gretel Witch music and then halts in front of* GERDA *and the* CROW.]

WITCH. Snip-snap-balle, snu-r-r-e! [*The* FLOWERS *all fly in fright up the stage and flutter off.* GERDA *runs behind the* CROW *in terror. They tremble and shiver.*]

GERDA [*peeping fearfully over the* CROW'S *shoulder*]. O-o-o-h!

CROW [*pushing* GERDA *in front of him*]. Krah! Krah! Don't [*in a trembling voice*] be afraid! It's only the Witch of the Forest. She comes to seek her supper. She-e-e knows everything. She is a bad dream, but she may tell you of Kay. [CROW *and* GERDA *keep up the business of running behind each other for a few seconds.*]

WITCH [*stopping in front of* GERDA]. Who are you?

GERDA [*backing, in fright, into the* ROBBER GIRL]. I—

I—[*turning to the* ROBBER GIRL] I—beg your pardon—are you a witch too?

ROBBER GIRL [*waving her knife*]. I am the Robber Girl, and these are my little Robbers. You are going to be eaten up soon.

WITCH [*to the* ROBBER GIRL]. You ugly brat. She is my supper!

GERDA [*getting behind the* CROW *again*]. Oh, please, don't eat me! I mean no harm. [WITCH *begins to dance around the stage, followed by the* LITTLE ROBBERS. *She chants as she dances.*]

WITCH.

Ha, ha, she's fat,
Ha, think of that,
[*Dances up to* GERDA *on her broomstick.*]
That Old Black Crow—
He may go!
The maid must stay
I eat to-day!
Ha-ha-ha!

[*She dances off and* GERDA *and the* CROW *start in the opposite direction and meet the* WITCH *as she comes around the stage.*]

WITCH [*in front of them*]. Ha, the Robber Girl may boil Sir Crow, her teeth are young and strong.

CROW [*pushing* GERDA *in front of him*]. Kr-a-ah! Kr-a-a-a-h! I am so tough you could not chew me!

GERDA. Oh, let us run away before she takes us for her supper.

WITCH. Ha! [*smacking her lips*] I shall relish her!

GERDA [*pleadingly*]. Oh-h-h-h! pl-e-a-s-e, dear Witch, don't eat me! Have you seen Kay? [*During the* WITCH'S *conversation with* GERDA *the* LITTLE ROBBERS *and the* ROBBER GIRL *follow her in pantomime, pretending to sharpen their knives and smacking their lips.*]

WITCH. Ha-ha, many moons ago he flew by on the Snow Queen's sleigh. He sleeps at the foot of her throne. He

does not dream of you. His heart is frozen. Ha! nothing will wake him but his kiss! No. Nothing will melt the lump of ice in his breast but tears. Ha!

GERDA. Tha-a-n-k you, Witch! [*Edging away.*] We'll go on. Come, Crow.

WITCH [*followed by* LITTLE ROBBERS, *circling around* GERDA]. Ah-h-h-! You will not go. Robber Girl, keep watch while I go to prepare the fire. Snip-snap, snurre! You'll be eaten, my dear, long before your tears fall. [*She circles around and goes off, followed by the* LITTLE ROBBERS. *As the* ROBBER GIRL *advances,* GERDA *throws herself on the* CROW.]

GERDA. Save me, Crow! Save me!

ROBBER GIRL. Come, your grief touches my heart. The Robber Girl will save you. I will steal you away from my Mother, and if you hurry we can be on our way before she returns.

WITCH [*coming back*]. Snip-snap, snurre! If she cries I will eat her now. [*She begins to dance again, and she makes her exit, chanting*]:

Ha! she is fat,
Just think of that,
The maid must stay,
I eat to-day.

ROBBER GIRL. Come, you must hurry. Run fast, and soon you will see the Snow Queen's Garden.

GERDA [*shivering*]. It is getting so cold and [*looking at herself*] I have no coat. My hood is lost.

ROBBER GIRL. You are at the frontier of the Snow Queen's Kingdom. See, here come the Queen's Guard! [*The* SNOW-FLAKES *flutter on.*]

GERDA [*kneeling*]. Dear Heaven! Send me twelve men's power to overcome the Wicked Snow Queen and the Goblin's Spell!

CROW [*kneeling beside* GERDA]. Come, come, see, your prayer is answered. [*The* SNOW-FLAKES *begin to flutter on and make a line between* GERDA *and the exit blocking her*

way. GERDA *tries to break through, but the* SNOW-FLAKES *flutter and push her back. The music of their dance in the First Act should be played until* GERDA *kneels in the center of stage. The* CROW *stands behind her trying to beat the* FLAKES *back. As she prays, the* ANGELS *march on from the opposite side from where the* SNOW-FLAKES *stand. They finally make a way through and in triumph lead her through as the curtain falls.*

SCENE II

Place—In the Palace of the Snow Queen.

"There was gold, heart's gold in that blessed kiss."

The curtain rises to the Erl King music, on the Palace of the SNOW QUEEN. *There is a blue light, as of long frozen ice over all. The* QUEEN *is seated on her throne with little* KAY *at her feet. Grouped about are the* SNOW-FLAKES *on one side and the* ICICLES. *As the curtain rises the* QUEEN *sings again the third verse of her song, "Fairest of Mortals."*

QUEEN [*cuddling* KAY *against her knee*]:

O lovely boy, thou must stay with me,
My charm and my spell is still laid on thee!
My Playmate art thou, so dear to my heart,
From thee, lovely boy, I can never depart,
From thee, lovely boy, I can never depart.

[*The* SNOW-FLAKES *and* ICICLES *sway in time to the music and repeat the last line with her. As they finish,* KAY *stretches his arms in a wide yawn and throws a ball at the* ICICLES. *There is a great fluttering, and the* QUEEN *takes* KAY *by the hand as she seats herself.*]

QUEEN. Is not this a beautiful place, little Kay? We are

sitting here in the middle of the Mirror of Reason, and it is the only one and best in the world.

KAY. It is fine to slide on, but I am tired of staying here. When can I go somewhere else?

QUEEN. You must find the word which is the answer to the great puzzle of the world, first.

KAY. I have moved the Icicles all about the Mirror of Reason, but I can't find the word. Please let me go.

QUEEN. If you find the word you shall be your own master, and I will give you the whole world and a new pair of skates.

KAY. It would do no good now. I have thought so hard that the ice is all cracked and no good for skating.

QUEEN [*rising*]. Ho, Icicles! A dance! Perhaps it will please little Kay. [*The* ICICLES *dance a stiff dance to any measured music.* KAY *pays no attention to them, but sits with his chin in his hand, staring ahead of him. At last he rises and turns to the* QUEEN.]

KAY [*crossly*]. Send them away. They make me dizzy, they turn so often.

QUEEN. Rest now, Icicles. The boy smiles not.

KAY [*as the* ICICLES *return to their places.*] I rather [*pushing over a* SNOW-FLAKE] shove the Snow-flakes over. I wish they were snow-balls, I could throw them at the Icicles.

QUEEN [*coaxingly*]. My palace halls are many piled with drifting snow. The young North Winds play there. Let the Snow-flakes lead you to the largest, and you can have a game with the White Foxes.

KAY. No, I don't want to play there. I want another boy to play with.

QUEEN. I shall bring you a playmate soon.

KAY [*clapping his hands*]. Oh, please fly away on your Snow Birds and get him to-day.

QUEEN [*smiling*]. I must wait until it is time to look into the black spots of the World and make them white. Then I shall bring you a playmate.

KAY [*waving his arms stiffly*]. Hurrah! We can slide all day down the frozen stairs.

QUEEN. And then you would smile?

KAY. No one smiles here. It is all dark and gloomy. Even the little bears do not laugh at their balls. And the white Lady Foxes never even gossip. It is no fun to stay here.

QUEEN [*taking his hand*]. Come, you are tired. You counted the stars too long. I will sing you to sleep. [*She croons her song softly. Enter a* SNOW-FLAKE *in a great flurry.*]

SNOW-FLAKE. Your Majesty, a mortal maiden stands before the gates. She demands entrance.

QUEEN. A Maiden! alone in my Wintry Kingdom!

SNOW-FLAKE. She is not alone, your Majesty. A strange bird is with her. He is as black as the deepest part of the Mirror of Reason, and he speaks so loudly that the Snow Birds are all frightened.

QUEEN. And the maiden?

SNOW-FLAKE. She is lovely, your Majesty. Red berries are no warmer than her cheeks. The stars no brighter than her eyes. She has no cloak, no muffler, and yet she does not shiver.

QUEEN [*clapping her hands*]. The charm! The Goblin's charm. She too must have the splinter of ice in her heart. Soon all the dear children will be mine. Bring her before me!

KAY [*disappointed*]. I wanted a boy. A girl is no fun. She will be like the Icicles. Too stiff to play with, and if I knock her over she may break! [*Enter the* SNOW-FLAKES *leading* GERDA, *followed by the* CROW. *They stand in front of the throne. The* CROW *tries to stand close to* GERDA, *but the* SNOW-FLAKES *push him aside.*]

CROW [*indignantly*]. Krah! Krah! How cold and dark it is. This climate will ruin my voice. I shall never be able to serenade my tame sweetheart again. Kra-a-a-h! Kra-a-a-h! [*Some* ICICLES *fall over in fright.*]

QUEEN [*with her hands over her ears*]. Away with the black creature. His song is not sweet. It will frighten away my Snow Birds and crack my palace walls! [*The* ICICLES *try to drag the* CROW *away. He fights them and hops back and finishes his "Caw."*]

CROW. Kr-a-a-h! Krah! No power of yours can drive me away, O Queen. I am the Wise Old Crow. I guide all the loving Maidens safely through the cold places of life. Krah! Krah!

QUEEN [*stepping to* GERDA'S *side*]. Come, Maiden. [*Turning to* KAY.] Here is your Playmate. The Magic Spell has sent her here. [*She pushes* GERDA *toward* KAY.]

GERDA [*peering at* KAY]. Why—how—strange you seem —and yet—you must—be— [*Joyfully.*] It is Kay! Little Kay!

CROW [*hopping up and down*]. Krah! Krah! I know it. It's Kay, all blue and cold.

QUEEN [*sharply*]. No, he is not cold. He is quite happy in my castle.

GERDA. At last, I have found you. Come with me, Kay. Grandmother mourns for you, and the Roses bloom on the roof.

QUEEN [*stepping between them angrily*]. Silence, Maiden, the Boy is mine. He cares not for your Roses. He loves the Ice and Snow. [KAY *stands looking from one to the other as if puzzled.*]

CROW [*coming near*]. Krah! Only a Maiden's tears can melt his heart. He does not know you now.

GERDA [*sobbing and throwing her arms about* KAY]. Kay, little Kay. It is Gerda, and I have come to the end of the world to find you.

KAY [*stares at her and then laughs joyfully*]. Why, it's Gerda, dear Gerda. Where have you been? [*Looking around.*] How cold it is here. Where am I?

GERDA. Don't you remember? It snowed, and the white bees swarmed in our yard and the Snow Queen took you away on her sleigh. I have come to take you home.

QUEEN [*alarmed as she recognizes* GERDA]. Alas, my power wanes. It is the loving Maiden and the Wise Old Crow. Ho! Snow-flakes! Icicles! Around the throne. We lose our little Playmate! [*The* SNOW-FLAKES *and* ICICLES *crowd around the throne.*]

CROW. Krah! Krah! I am so happy there's a lump in my throat. Krah! Krah! [*Dancing about.*]

GERDA. Come, Kay. Let us go into the Sunshine. The Flowers all wait for us. They will sing their songs for you, too!

QUEEN [*greatly alarmed, waving her wand*]. Bad Goblin! Bad Goblin! Bad Goblin! I call thee to my aid! [*All stand silent and listen. No answer comes.*]

CROW. Call again, Queen! Krah! Krah! Your charm is broken! Krah! Krah!

GERDA [*kneeling before the* QUEEN *and kissing her hand*]. Dear Snow Queen. We love you too—but we must go back to Grandmother. She sits alone with her knitting in the sweet Spring Sunshine, which warms the world.

QUEEN [*sadly, throwing her veil over her face*]. The Sunshine! The Sunshine comes! My Palace walls tremble. [*The lights come like a burst of sunlight to part of the spring music;* GERDA *and* KAY *dance about. The* QUEEN'S *crown under the white light is of roses. The* SNOW-FLAKES *carry garlands of flowers.*]

GERDA. Winter is gone and see the Queen! She is crowned with flowers! Queen, dear Queen, come and play with us!

QUEEN [*stepping forward and taking* KAY *and* GERDA *by the hands while the* CROW *takes* GERDA'S *hand*]. You have found the answer to the puzzle, lovely boy! And you [*to* GERDA] do not need the strength of twelve men. Your innocent faith is the strongest thing in the world. True love is eternal and is the only power that can banish from the earth all frost and cold. A tender thought and a kind wish will make the sun shine everywhere. While there is true love, Spring will reign forever! [*The music of the Spring*

Song strikes up and the QUEEN *waves her wand. From all sides come the* FLOWERS *and group themselves about the stage. The* QUEEN *sings the verse of her song and the others must join her in the chorus dancing to the music.*]

QUEEN [*Spring Song*]:

Earth is glowing, zephyrs blowing,
Dancing Sunshine over all,
Trees are growing, blossoms throwing,
Holding us in beauty's thrall.

CHORUS:

Laughing, dancing, ever singing,
Joyfully our voices ringing,
All the flowers, birds in bowers,
Tell the earth that it is Spring,
Falling showers, golden hours,
Tell the earth that it is Spring!

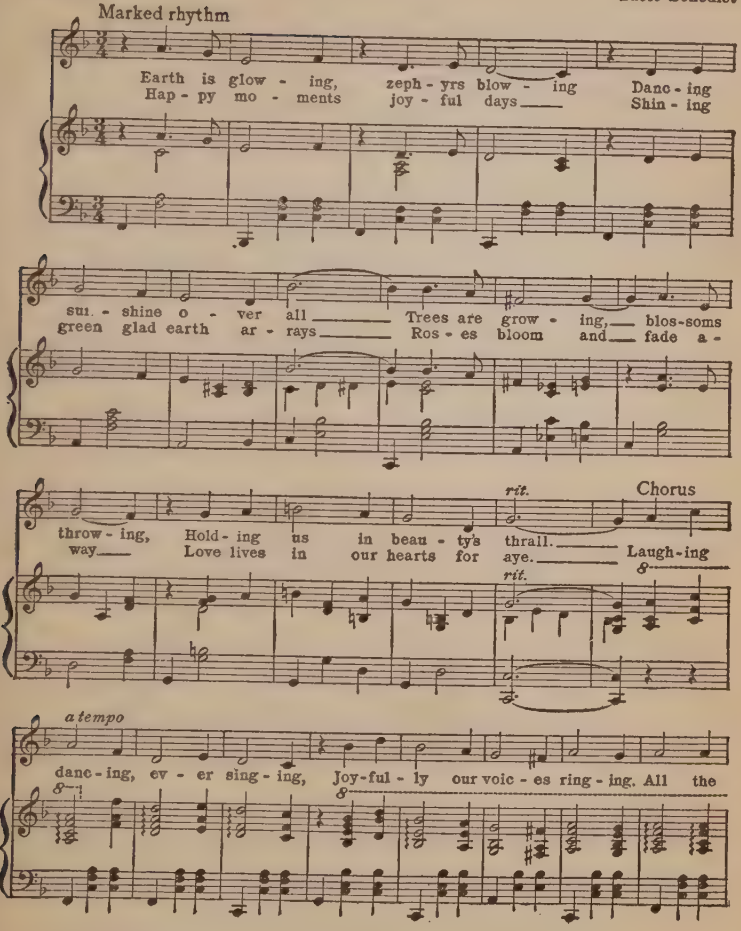
Happy moments, joyful days
Shining green, glad earth arrays,
Roses bloom and fade away,
Love lives in our hearts for aye.

CHORUS.

[*The dancing must be a swaying with the song and be as free and natural as possible. Keep the* QUEEN *and* KAY, GERDA *and the* CROW *near the front of the stage with the chorus all massed behind them as the curtain falls. The curtain falls on the last note of the second chorus.*]

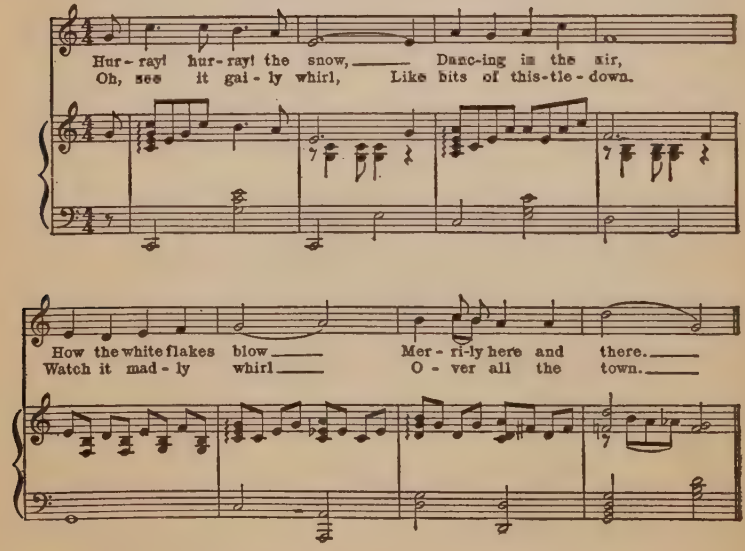
Spring Song

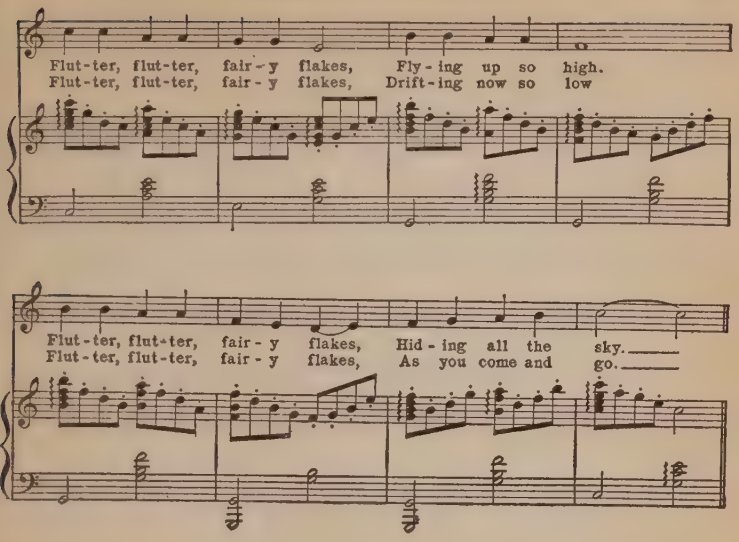
Elizabeth Grimball — Lucie Benedict


Marked rhythm
Earth is glow - ing, zeph - yrs blow - ing Danc - ing
Hap - py mo - ments joy - ful days Shin - ing
sun - shine o - ver all Trees are grow - ing, blos-soms
green glad earth ar - rays Ros - es bloom and fade a -
rit.
Chorus
throw - ing, Hold - ing us in beau - ty's thrall.
way Love lives in our hearts for aye. Laugh-ing
rit.
a tempo
danc - ing, ev - er sing - ing, Joy-ful - ly our voic - es ring - ing. All the

Snow Song

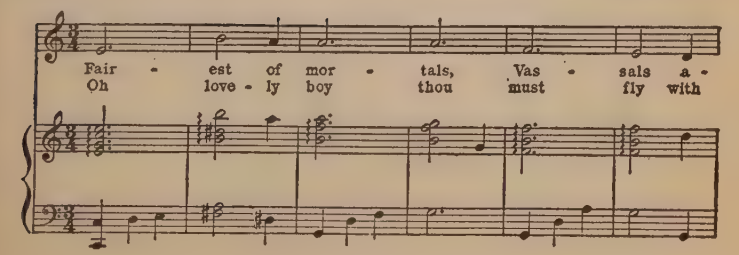
Elizabeth Grimball **Lucie Benedict**

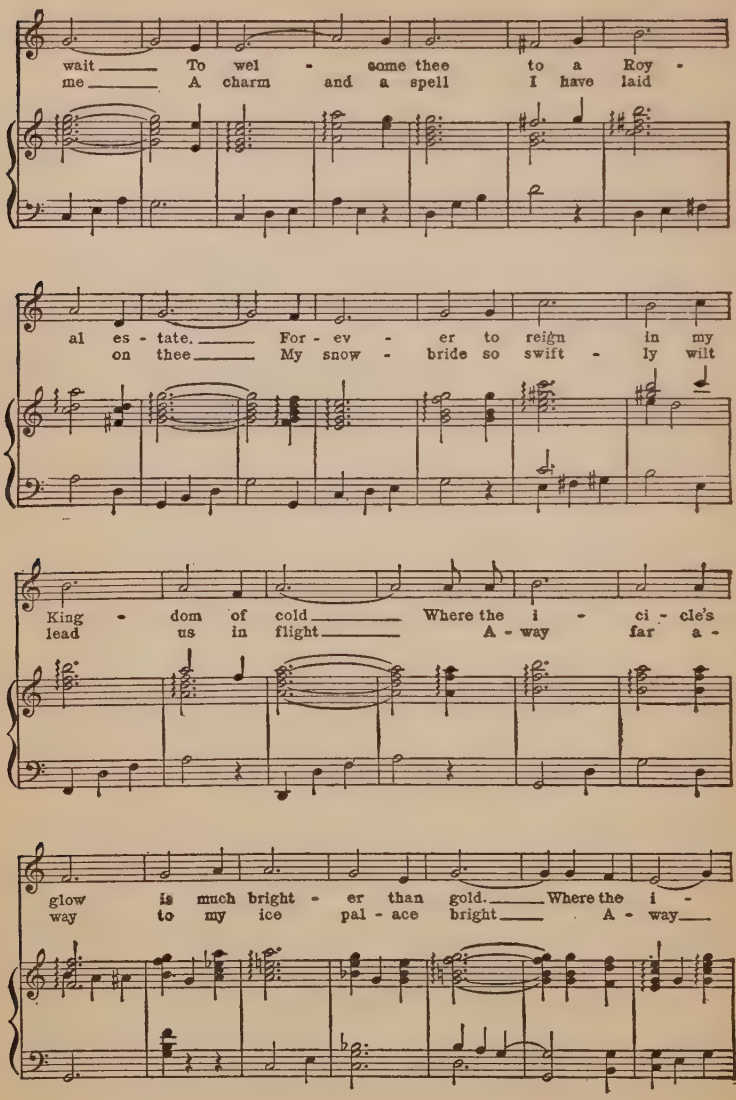

Hur - ray! hur - ray! the snow, Danc-ing in the air,
Oh, see it gai - ly whirl, Like bits of this-tle - down.
How the white flakes blow Mer - ri-ly here and there.
Watch it mad - ly whirl O - ver all the town.

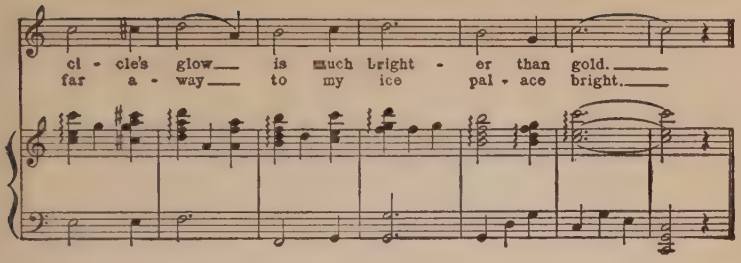

Flut-ter, flut-ter, fair-y flakes, Fly-ing up so high.
Flut-ter, flut-ter, fair-y flakes, Drift-ing now so low
Flut-ter, flut-ter, fair-y flakes, Hid-ing all the sky.
Flut-ter, flut-ter, fair-y flakes, As you come and go.

Fairest of Mortals

Elizabeth Grimball **Lucie Benedict**




wait To wel - come thee to a Roy -
me A charm and a spell I have laid
al es - tate. For - ev - er to reign in my
on thee My snow - bride so swift - ly wilt
King - dom of cold Where the i - ci - cle's
lead us in flight A - way far a -
glow is much bright - er than gold. Where the i -
way to my ice pal - ace bright A - way


cl - cle's glow is much bright - er than gold.
far a - way to my ice pal - ace bright.

APRIL FOOL'S DAY

TWO PLUM PUDDINGS *

A PANTOMIME

By

COLIN CLEMENTS

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CHARACTERS

PIERROT
PIERRETTE
CLOWN
THE PUPPET-MASTER
THE BARKER

TWO PLUM PUDDINGS

SCENE: *The sitting-room and kitchen combined of a little white house in a cobble-stoned street near the Theatre des Funambules. In the same street is a shop where one may buy plum pudding, and if there is one thing in the world that* PIERROT *loves almost as much as he loves his wife,* PIERRETTE, *and his little son,* CLOWN, *it's plum pudding. The walls of the room (into which we shall soon find ourselves peeping) are the color of pea-soup and the woodwork is the color of wild roses. A strange combination to be sure, but* PIERROT *and* PIERRETTE *having been born to the theater have a fondness for colors that "stick well wi' the eye." There are two windows at the back hung with paper lace curtains—the sort of lace one sees in those boxes of candied fruits which so mysteriously appear in the shop windows at Christmas time. There is a door right, another left, and still another back, which opens to the street. A fire, in an open grate, burns merrily at the left—of course, it's really a red electric bulb but it looks like a fire and gives a nice warm glow. Between the two windows at the back is a shelf of painted china, all in a row, and a big wicker trunk of table linen. This wicker trunk, with colored labels and posters stuck to all sides of it, adds a histrionic dignity to the room. It was used in those happy days when* PIERROT *and* PIERRETTE *used to travel by rail, but since then* PIERRETTE *has used the trunk for her table linen. She is very proud of her china and table linen which was given her, the day she was married, by Pantaloon and Columbine. The other furniture, all painted*

white, consists of a table, near the center of the room, two very proper-looking straightbacked chairs and a high chair (that's for CLOWN) *against the wall at the right.*

A NOTE ON THE CHARACTERS (FOR GROWN-UPS)

Pierrot is a born actor. You'll notice that soon enough when he comes on; he struts in a grand style and swings his arms in all directions. None of this back-to-the-audience acting for Pierrot. He was born to the theater in those good old days when actors were actors; when asides were quite as important as any other part of the play; when acting was an art and not a reproduction of life; when the land behind a closed curtain was a land of great adventure.

Pierrette too was born to the boards. She is a piquant little thing and loves the theater passionately; for her, also, the theater is a tradition. A great many people will consider her a little old-fashioned. She is, praise be! for she belongs to the days before actresses began getting themselves into society columns and misbehaving like Duchesses.

As for Clown—he was born a clown. It's like being born a king; one is or one isn't and nothing on earth can make it otherwise. "You could not become a clown by taking thought, you had to be born one. It was just a chance," says no less an authority than Sir James Barrie. The little fellow is getting on fast enough; already he can stand on his daddy's shoulder, wink both eyes, alternately, and turn any number of beautiful somersaults.

The Prologue: Sh-h-h! A big golden moon has appeared on the curtains; they part and a man appears! Can it be another Mr. Clunn Lewis? He makes three great bows—left, right and middle; raises his hand until all is silent, slowly takes a folded sheet of yellow paper from his inside pocket and reads to us: The list of characters, the setting (which we can hardly wait to see) and, if there is time, he may tell us a word or two about Pierrot, Pierrette, and

Clown. When this is finished he makes three more great bows—left, right and middle. With his right hand he opens the curtain and says in a loud voice:

"Chers enfants de l'art mimique,
Sous ma baquette magique,
Animez-vous, je le veux!
Des ce moment, troupe unique,
Ah! qu'un long rire homerique
Suive tes pas en tous lieux,
Debout, debout, je le veux."

These are the magic words. The curtains tremble for a moment, then part a little and there before us stand Pierrot and Pierrette, hand in hand. They smile and bow. Good Heavens, what's this! It's Clown, down on all fours, crawling between his daddy's legs. He jumps to his feet, bows, and throws kisses in all directions. The lights slowly fade out and the actors disappear. In back of us, just outside of the theater in which we are now sitting the Barker is heard beating a big bass drum and calling out: "Mesdames! Messieurs! Petits Enfants! Step up . . . step up . . . step up! You will always find amusement in our theater. Where else can you cut such a dash and see so much for the price you pay here? To-night, Pierrot, most excellent of actors, the beautiful Pierrette, and cunning little Clown will enact for your pleasure a new and original piece never before seen on the boards. Only a few choice seats left. Step up . . . step up . . . step up!"

The Puppet-master leans far forward and whispers:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the play is about to begin." [*He bows and disappears.*]

The moon has faded out, the noise of the big drum and the voice of the Barker have gradually died away, the curtains part. We are peeping into the sitting-room and kitchen combined of the little white house in a cobble-stoned street near the Theatre des Funambules.

Scene I: Anticipation

The door at the left opens and Pierrette comes fluttering into the room. How lightly she walks—like a bird on a green lawn! She hurries to the window and looks down the street, shakes her head and, just a bit disappointed, trips to the fire and gives it a poke or two. Again she runs to the window and looks out; again she is disappointed. Just to pass the time away she begins to dance, slowly at first but soon faster and faster until she seems to be everywhere at once; she has become a butterfly on a day in June, a butterfly who starts for a pink, sees a marigold, and, just as she is about to light, spies a red rose in the farthest corner of the garden. So it goes, round and round and round the table. Pierrette stops suddenly, thrusts her head forward and listens; some one has evidently whistled. She hurries to the window and stands there laughing and waving, she trips to the hearth, swings the kettle over the fire and quickly hides behind the wicker trunk.

Scene II: A Surprise

The door at the back is flung open and Pierrot struts into the room; he is carrying a paper bag which is almost as big as he is. He looks this way and that way, shrugs his shoulders and shakes the snow from his coat. Such beautiful snow is stage snow, it shines and glistens like a million tiny diamonds and never melts or makes a muss—another instance, is this, of art improving upon nature. Pierrot sets his bag down on the table and tiptoes to the door at the left. He looks into the other room, shakes his head and crosses to the door at the right and looks into the room on that side. All the while Pierrette can hardly keep from laughing out loud. We have a suspicion that Pierrot knows exactly where Pierrette is hiding, for hasn't she hid in the selfsame place since the very first day they were married? But he wouldn't for worlds let her know that he knows

where she is. A bit of a bluff is Pierrot. Disconsolately he crosses his arms, and sinking down on the wicker trunk throws one leg over the other. The temptation is too much for Pierrette, she reaches out and kisses his ankle! Then begins the wildest chase that ever was seen, Pierrot after Pierrette. This way. That way. Here, there and here again. Sometimes Pierrot almost catches Pierrette but she darts under his arm and is away again. At last, out of breath, Pierrette lets herself be caught. Pierrot folds her in his arms and kisses her lightly on either cheek. Then, overcome by curiosity, Pierrette tries to peep into the bag on the table but Pierrot will not allow this until he has been properly paid in kisses for such a privilege. Pierrette leans far across the table, and turning up her face prettily, allows her husband three kisses. In a burst of ecstasy he opens the bag and takes out three plum puddings, two large ones and a small one. Pierrette, needless to say, can hardly contain her joy and goes skipping gayly around the room while Pierrot, proud and happy, stands smiling first at her and then at the plum puddings and then at her again. A large square linen cloth is brought for the table; three plates, and two chairs. How quickly the table is made ready for a banquet—a plum-pudding banquet. Everything is now in its proper place except the highchair, which is carried with great ceremony by both Pierrot and Pierrette to its place at the table. Its place, of course, is between the two larger chairs, facing the audience; Pierrette nods to Pierrot and, stopping for a moment to see if the kettle is yet boiling, skips from the room through the door at the left to fetch a fresh kerchief, Pierrot picks up the paper bag, makes an air balloon of it, pops it and gayly laughing goes into the room, right.

Scene III: Temptation

The door at the back opens and slowly—first an eye, then a nose, and at last a whole chubby face appears. It's Clown.

He jumps into the room, quickly closes the door behind him, ties one end of his long knitted scarf to the door knob and unwinds himself. He's down on the floor now turning somersaults all about the room. He stops suddenly, rises to his feet like a jumping-jack and stands, his legs far apart and his arms akimbo, sniffing the air. He shakes his head knowingly as if to say, "Ah-o! Plum puddings!" He moves quickly to the table and stands looking at the feast thereon with wide, dancing eyes. Twice he reaches out his hand to touch one of the puddings; a third time he reaches out, but again conquering himself, he puts his hands behind him and turns away. His good resolution does not stay with him long, for in a minute he has turned back to the table again. He reaches over and changes his little plum pudding for the larger one at his father's place. He hears some one entering the room and quickly, like a frightened mouse, scurries under the table and is hidden from sight by the tablecloth.

Scene IV: A Discovery

Pierrette enters the room from the left. From the shelf at the back, she takes down a little painted tea-pot, carries it to the hearth and fills it with boiling water. She again returns to the shelves at the back and takes down three cups and saucers; she stands for a moment looking out of the window then, shaking her head with an air of disappointment, she carries the cups and saucers to the table in the center of the room. When she discovers that Clown has taken the big plum pudding for himself and given his father the tiny one her face lights up with a happy smile. She goes skipping about the room in search of her naughty little boy—of course, she never looks under the table. [*This is, after all, only a play; things don't happen in plays until it's time for them to happen and it's not yet time for* Pierrette *to find* Clown *hiding under the table.*] At last she gives up the search, runs to the table and rearranges

the plum puddings; then quickly disappears into the room from which she entered.

Scene V: Mischievousness

Pop! The tablecloth is lifted and Clown's head appears. He rolls his eyes, turns his head this way and that, and sits there looking about the room cautiously. Satisfied that no one is about he quietly crawls on all fours and quick as a flash is at the table again. One knows very well what Clown is saying to himself; one can read from the tilt of his head, and the long, sideway glances at the plum puddings, the thoughts that are galloping through the Clown's curly little head. They go like this: "Why not eat one plum pudding? Just the little plum pudding? It would really never be missed." He's not so sure of this and stops a moment. Then, "Well, if it is missed I'll blame the cat, cats must eat plum pudding. Sure." So, having convinced himself that taking a tiny plum pudding isn't so very naughty after all, he seizes the little pudding and disappears under the table.

Scene VI: Satisfaction

The door at the right opens and Pierrot comes strutting into the room. He glances at the table, chuckles with delight and rubbing his hands together in anticipation of the very jolly party which is soon to begin, he walks with wide strides and a ridiculous swing of his body to the fire-place, where he stands warming himself.

Scene VII: Consternation

Pierrette enters from the left. She sees Pierrot and runs to him. She is evidently telling him of Clown's naughty pranks for she giggles merrily as she tells her story while

poor Pierrot, holding his sides as if they might break any moment, is bent over with laughter. Hand in hand they walk to the table—and discover that one plum pudding is missing! Pierrot storms. Pierrette pouts. They go running madly about the room in search of the lost pudding. Pierrot suddenly puts his forefinger to his nose and rolls his eyes knowingly. He's guessed Clown's hiding place. He points to the table. Pierrette, half afraid of the awful truth, shakes her head "No." Pierrot stubbornly shakes his head "Yes." But why stand in the center of the room arguing when it's so easy to settle the matter by simply lifting the tablecloth? Pierrot does so.

Scene VIII: Another Discovery

There's Clown. But no plum pudding! He's eaten every last raisin of it. [*Since this is only a play it's just as well to tell you here that the little plum pudding isn't a real plum pudding. It's what is known as a "property"; it's a blue toy balloon which* Clown, *once under the table and thus hidden from the audience, pricks with a pin! The Theater is so delightfully unreal.*]

Scene IX: Forgiveness

Clown crawls from under the table and stands, shamefaced and sorry, before his mother and father. But Pierrot is a stern father, he has a mind of his own as to how children should be reared. In spite of Pierrette's protestations he insists that Clown stand in the corner with his face to the wall. This done, Pierrot seats Pierrette, fetches the pot of tea from the hearth and sits down at his place. Poor Pierrette, she can hardly keep her eyes from straying over to her little son in the corner; neither can Pierrot for that matter. And so what was meant to have been a merry festival comes to be but a miserable meal. Pierrot slices a great piece of plum pudding and eats it but, strangely

enough, he's suddenly lost his taste for pudding. Pierrette tries to eat but gives it up and sits looking down at her plate. There are great tears in her eyes. Pierrot stops, looks up at Pierrette, then slowly reaches across the table and taking his wife's face in his hand he looks deep into her eyes. He rises, moves around to her side of the table and whispers something into her ear. She's delighted. He pulls back the highchair, strides over to the corner and taking Clown up in his arms carries him to the table. The feast now begins in earnest. Clown, glad to be forgiven, is happy; Pierrot and Pierrette, glad to be forgiving, are even happier. Great slices of pudding are heaped upon Clown's plate, tea is poured by Pierrette and all is well.

And so the curtains close upon this unmoral little play of "Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child." But this is a pantomime for holidays, and holidays are made for children. Besides, whatever could a child be like that was never spoiled, just a little-plum-pudding's-worth-spoiled-on holidays!

AN APRIL FOOL *

By

VIRGINIA OLCOTT

* Courtesy of Virginia Olcott.

CHARACTERS

JACK
MOTHER
PETER FOOL
JENNY FOOL
JOLLY FOOL
SIMON FOOL
BABY FOOL
And as many other little Fools as are desired

AN APRIL FOOL

ACT I

The Fools' Revolt

Scene: Jack's *bedroom. A plainly furnished child's room with a little white cot to the left. A window with parted chintz curtains. Near by a mantel with a tall clock which points to nine. Two or three simple chairs and a small bureau make up the furniture.*

As the curtain rises Peter Fool *stands in the center of the room. His hands are in his pockets and his feet apart. He scowls.*

Peter Fool [*impatiently*]. It's nine o'clock! I wish the others would come. That boy goes to bed in half an hour and unless they hurry we shall never have time to decide what to do. [*He calls through the window.*] "Simon! Simon!"

Voice [*in the distance*]. We are coming! [*There is a murmur of little voices on the outside which grows louder and then a number of* Fools *come creeping into the room. Some climb in from the windows. Others enter through the half open door.*]

Peter Fool [*crossly*]. Why are you so late?

Simon Fool. Late! I thought we never should get here. That boy was sitting on the porch below, so we could not enter either by the door or window.

Jolly Fool. Never mind! we are here now. Don't scold, Peter. [*Pointing to the* Baby, *who has burst into tears.*] Look at the Baby, she is crying again!

JENNY FOOL [*kneeling to comfort her*]. Don't cry! Peter isn't angry any longer. Listen, we are going to begin now.

BABY FOOL [*brightening*]. What—are—we-going-to-do —to the boy?

PETER FOOL [*with determination*]. It has to be settled to-night, that is certain, for to-morrow is the first day of April.

ALL THE FOOLS [*mournfully*]. Yes—to-morrow is the first day of April.

SIMON FOOL. And I don't intend to be a Fool any longer.

PETER FOOL. Nor I. I've been a Fool ever since I was born and I am tired of it.

JENNY FOOL [*very wisely*]. But how are we going to stop it?

PETER FOOL. We must stop it. [*With a shudder.*] Do you remember last year?

SIMON FOOL. Do I? I should think so! That boy made me spend the whole day whistling back of his grandmother's chair and she thought it was the canary; I heard her say so at dinner-time. She said she was afraid that the bird had a cold because its voice was so hoarse. [*Angrily.*] The idea!!

JENNY FOOL [*with disgust*]. Do you know what I did last April Fools' Day? Every time Jack's mother wanted to work he made me tickle the Baby so she woke up and cried. I don't believe in doing such mean things, yet I had to. I felt sorry for the mother, she was so upset! She said she could not understand what was the matter with that child to make it behave so! She didn't know that Jack was hiding back of the nursery door all the time.

PETER FOOL. Well, I was as big a Fool as any of you and I don't mean to be one again. [*Very seriously.*] Listen to my plan! [*All the* FOOLS *gather around him.*] In a few minutes Jack will come to bed. That's our time. We must catch him and make a Fool of him!

JENNY FOOL [*questioning*]. Make a Fool of him? How?

PETER FOOL [*slowly*]. We—will—make—him—one—of—us. Let him know just how it feels to be a Fool. The first thing we will do is to dress him in some of our ridiculous clothes!

JENNY FOOL. You certainly are clever, Peter. That's a fine plan. We will make him so uncomfortable to-night that he will never want to mention the first day of April again.

SIMON FOOL [*excited*]. Then this is the very last time we shall ever be Fools!

BABY FOOL [*frightened, weeps*]. What—shall—we—be—then? [*The* FOOLS *look at one another somewhat startled and puzzled. Tableau.*]

PETER FOOL [*after a pause*]. I don't know what we shall be— At any rate we can't be anything worse than what we are now. [*Brightening.*] Maybe we shall become Easter Rabbits, or—or Halloween Witches, or Pumpkin Boys—!!

JOLLY FOOL [*with glee*]. Oh! Oh! I want to be one of Santa Claus' workmen and help fill the stockings!

JENNY FOOL [*wisely*]. Be sensible! We don't know what we shall be, but we do know that we don't want to be April Fools any longer. And that's what we must talk about to-night. [*Slowly.*] How shall we punish Jack? He has played so many jokes every year that we are tired of doing all his mischief. For one thing, I don't understand why his mother puts up with him! [*Footsteps are heard and a boy's voice calling.*]

VOICE [*without*]. Good night, mother, good night! To-morrow is April Fools' Day!

PETER FOOL. It's Jack! Hide, everybody!! [*He picks up the* BABY *and scampers back of the door. The others creep under the bed or behind the curtains.* JACK *enters in his pajamas and bath robe. He runs over to the window.*]

JACK. The moon is shining! It promises a fine day to-morrow. I am glad, for I have many things I want to do!

[*While he is speaking* PETER FOOL *creeps out of his hiding place and steals over to the boy. The others follow him.*]

PETER FOOL [*indignantly*]. What are your plans, Boy?

JACK [*turning, startled*]. Oh, who—are—you?

PETER FOOL. Never mind who we are. We all know *you!*

JENNY FOOL [*maliciously*]. How do you like our looks?

JACK [*with anger*]. I don't! I think you look foolish!

JENNY FOOL. So we do, but you made us so. [*Very slowly.*] And—now—we—are—going—to—dress—you—just—like—ourselves! Come, Jolly! Simon! help me! [*Quickly the* FOOLS *begin to dress the struggling angry boy.* PETER *tucks him into his spotted jacket,* JENNY *slips off her white frilled skirt and fastens it around his waist.* SIMON *pins on his broad neck-frill.* JOLLY *puts into his hands a staff and bells, and fits the* BABY'S *cap on his head. At first* JACK *struggles but at last he stands half crying in anger.*]

ALL THE FOOLS [*laughing with great mirth*]. Now! Jack, you are one of us!

JOLLY FOOL. Come, let's sing him a song of welcome. [*Forming a circle the* FOOLS *merrily clap their hands and stamp their feet as they sing.*]

SONG

[*Air: "Ten Little Indians."*]

One little, Two little, Three little April Fools,
Poor little, gay little, sad little April Fools,
Four little, Five little, Six little April Fools,
All on April Fool morning.

[*Joining hands they prance around the indignant boy, singing their song.*]

JENNY FOOL [*mockingly*]. You look just like me! Just like a Fool!

JACK [*with wrath*]. I am not a Fool!

JENNY FOOL. Oh, yes, you are! See, you even have your cap and bells. [*In jest.*] Do you know what we are going to do with you? [*Very solemnly.*] Listen, we are going to take you across the street to Robert Phillips' house and he will make a Fool of you all day to-morrow.

JACK [*half crying*]. I won't go.

JOLLY FOOL. You must. Fools have to do what they are told.

JACK. I have not spoken to Robert for a week. Ah, please don't make me go!

PETER FOOL [*severely*]. You must go. [*To the others.*] Lead him away, Jolly! Jenny, take his other arm! Now we are ready! [*The* FOOLS *drag the struggling boy toward the door. He has lost his cap and bells and has thrown away the staff, in his anger. As they reach the door he wildly breaks from their hold, pulls off his jacket and skirt, then rushes and flings himself into the bed.*]

WOMAN'S VOICE [*outside*]. What is the matter, Jackie? Are you having a night-mare?

ALL THE FOOLS. It's his mother! [*Hastily they gather up their clothes and scamper out of the open window, as the mother enters in her night robe and boudoir cap. She holds a lighted candle. She looks dazed as though just awakened. She goes to the bed where the figure of the boy is hidden in the sheets.*]

MOTHER [*tenderly*]. What's the matter, little boy?

JACK [*sitting up, breathless*]. The—Fools!—They—were—here!

MOTHER [*wondering*]. There is no one here, you've been dreaming! See, it's midnight! [*Looking toward the mantel.*] Why, the clock is stopped! Go to sleep again, little boy, and I will watch beside you. [*She smooths and tucks him tenderly between the covers, singing softly a little lullaby, as the curtain falls.*]

THE KING OF SHERWOOD *

By

IVY BOLTON

This play is suitable for a puppet show such as is described in Tony Sarg's book on Puppets and Puppet Plays. It can also be given on the regular stage, the part of Balaam being taken by a boy or girl.

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CHARACTERS

ROBIN HOOD, *the King of Sherwood*
ALLAN-A-DALE, *a northern bard*
ELLEN, *his lady love*
SIR STEPHEN, *an elderly knight*
THORKEN OF THE DALE, *father of* ELLEN
DAME GERTRUDE, *his wife*
THE ABBOT OF FURNESS, *a luxurious cleric*
FRIAR TUCK, *the curtal friar*
THE TINKER, *a good-for-naught*
LAUGHING LIPS, *a jester*
BALAAM, *the tinker's ass*

THE KING OF SHERWOOD

ACT I

Sherwood Forest at dawn. The Wapping Road runs through the forest. The shrine of the curtal friar's hermitage is at one side. A mossy bank is near by. A voice behind the scenes is singing.

VOICE:

Sherwood, Sherwood, dew-drenched in the dawn,
Listen to the silver note of Robin's silver horn,
Echoing through the greenwood, sounding o'er the brake,
Robin Hood is calling; listen and awake!
Friar Tuck and Little John, all the merry men,
Answer as the bugle note sounds across the glen,
Answer to the silver note of Robin's silver horn.
Sherwood is awaking, dew-drenched in the dawn.

[*Enter* LAUGHING LIPS, *the jester. He peers through the trees and dances about. Then he stops and listens.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. Robin! Robin! ROBIN! Peste, where is the man? Am I to waste my valuable time a-waiting for one who never comes? Robin! Robin! ROBIN, I say! Then wilt thou even do without thy jester, for I shall seek adventures by myself. A jester, masterless, must find some other way to play the fool. But hark, who comes? Why, it is the tinker and his little brother, Balaam. [LAUGHING LIPS *hides. Outside a great clatter of tin is heard, followed by groans from the* TINKER.]

TINKER [*outside*]. Whoa-whohoa—whoa—WHOA! Ba-

laam, whohoa! [*Enter* BALAAM *with the tin. He kicks his heels, but as the jester peeps out at him, he stops.* LAUGHING LIPS *hides again as the* TINKER *enters.*]

TINKER. Balaam, thou art an ass of asses! Whoa, I say! Here are two good washbowls, five tankards and three kettles lost through thine asininity. The whip shall be for thee, sirrah, and no nooning. [BALAAM *does not move. He simply waggles an ear. The jester peeps out again.*]

TINKER. Fool of an ass, go on! Gid ap, gid ap, gid ap! Dost thou not know, Balaam, that I have a chance to earn fourscore angels from the sheriff of Nottingham, if I can capture the outlaw, Robin Hood? And here thou standest, ill-gotten beast! [BALAAM *continues to stand.*] In truth, I am clean exhausted. I will rest me on this mossy bank and take a nap. Whoa, Balaam! [*The* TINKER *falls asleep and* LAUGHING LIPS *comes out. He stoops over the* TINKER *and takes away his warrant.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. So, Master Tinker, thou wouldst try to arrest better men than thyself! I do not think thou wilt serve this warrant. Sleep on, sluggard! Here is an adventure for a fool. There be one fool and two asses, and the biggest of the asses is asleep. The fool will take the warrant to Robin Hood. Balaam, [BALAAM *waggles an ear.*] poor little tired donkey! [BALAAM *drops both ears.*] Thou wouldst like a day in the greenwood? [BALAAM *nods his head.*] Come then, we will leave this tinware for the other ass. [*Piles it beside the* TINKER. LAUGHING LIPS *goes out followed by* BALAAM *waggling his ears. The* FRIAR *enters.*]

FRIAR. Laughing Lips, what mischief art thou at now? Come back, I say! Why, what have we here? A tinker? Wake up, fellow, nor dare to drowse so near Saint Dunstan's shrine! Wake up!

TINKER [*sitting up*]. Beshrew thee, man, cannot a tired workingman rest himself for a moment? I and my poor little ass have been afoot the greater part of the night . . .

FRIAR. Talk not to reverend men in such fashion, tinker, else will the hermit of this shrine be forced to take to carnal weapons to teach a rough tongue courtesy. Thy little ass seems to have known better than to waste the golden hours on a grassy bank.

TINKER [*springing up*]. My ass, my ass, my little Balaam! The evil folk of the forest have stolen him. My little ass, my little ass! Alack! alack! what will become of me!

FRIAR. Pick up thy tin and get thee gone, tinker! And remember this . . . the forest folk may not be reviled. Bring two large flagons and a venison pasty to Saint Dunstan's shrine and mayhap thy thoughtless words may be forgiven. [*The* TINKER *goes out weeping. The* FRIAR *draws back as* ALLAN-A-DALE *enters.*]

ALLAN [*singing*]:

Oh, merry is the good greenwood,
But dull the day to me;
No lark may rise upon my sky
To cheer my misery.

Alack the day, alack the day,
Black sorrow is for me.
No lark may rise upon my sky
To cheer my misery.

[ALLAN *falls a-weeping while the jester and* BALAAM *peep out at him.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. What a ditty for a May morn! Who art thou who liest there, killing all the grass with salt water? [ALLAN-A-DALE *springs up as* ROBIN HOOD *enters.*]

ROBIN HOOD. What have we here? A likely lad, in truth, and one over young to know such deep sorrow. Touch not thy weapons, boy, I am a friend. Where is that jester? Ho, Laughing Lips!

LAUGHING LIPS [*mysteriously*]. There's danger brewing, Robin. Beware the tinker! [*He draws back.* BALAAM *looks out and wags his ears.* ROBIN HOOD *laughs.*]

ROBIN HOOD. What hast thou there, jester? What mischief art thou at now?

LAUGHING LIPS [*indignantly*]. We be serving thee, I and my little brother here, whom I have saved from serfdom and slavery. Beware, I say, beware!

ROBIN HOOD. Of what? Thy jests or the long ears of thy boon companion? But enough! [*Turning to* ALLAN.] What ails thee, lad? What is thy name?

ALLAN. I am Allan-a-Dale, a most unhappy minstrel.

LAUGHING LIPS. The third ass! Who would be unhappy on a May morn?

ROBIN HOOD. Tell thy tale, boy. All is not lost yet.

ALLAN. I love a maid, Ellen, daughter of old Thorken of the Dale. The fairest, sweetest, loveliest . . .

LAUGHING LIPS. Old Thorken all of that! The lad is blind!

ALLAN [*testily*]. Ellen, I mean. She loves me and I would die for her, the dearest, sweetest, loveliest . . .

LAUGHING LIPS. Thou hast said all that before.

ROBIN HOOD. Peace, jester! Then what is wrong? Hast thou quarreled?

ALLAN. Nay, she doth not quarrel, the dearest, sweetest, loveliest maid in merry England. But her ambitious father would wed her this very day to old Sir Stephen, thrice her age and crabbed as a gnarled oak. The Abbot of Furness comes to wed her at this shrine within the hour.

ROBIN HOOD. A sorry tale! The Abbot of Furness coming hither? Perchance I can help thee. I and my merry men may make him change his mind.

ALLAN [*startled*]. Thou art Robin Hood!

ROBIN HOOD. Aye.

ALLAN. And thou wilt help me? Then will I be thy servant until my life's end.

LAUGHING LIPS. What will the dearest, sweetest, loveliest say to that?

ROBIN HOOD. Peace there, jester! Art thou in earnest, boy? Wilt thou join our band?

ALLAN. With all my heart, and I speak, too, for Ellen.

ROBIN HOOD. My sweet Lady Marian will counsel and befriend her. Then do I admit thee, Allan-a-Dale, as minstrel of our band.

LAUGHING LIPS [*coming out*]. What about me and my little brother?

ROBIN HOOD. What little brother, sirrah? [BALAAM *comes out with drooping ears.*] An ass?

LAUGHING LIPS. Only one, Robin. He, too, hath been mistreated. Look at the scars the whip hath made! [BALAAM *looks dejected.*] Balaam, dost thou not want to be a merry man? [BALAAM *nods.*]

ROBIN HOOD [*laughing*]. Balaam, I make thee member of our company in good and legal standing. [BALAAM'S *ears go up.*] Now come, merry men all. We must lay our plans.

LAUGHING LIPS. Two asses, a fool and a wise man! Balaam, sweetest, dearest, LOVELIEST, there be adventures ahead. Come!

[CURTAIN]

ACT II

Sherwood Forest at Noonday

A VOICE [*singing behind the scenes*]:

Sherwood in the noontide; drowsy are the trees;
Birdlings are a-twitter in among the leaves.
Softly steal the red deer through the glade and glen,
Softer sounds the silver horn of Robin's merry men.
Robin, Robin, Robin, hear the echoes ring.
Robin, Robin, Robin, Sherwood greets her king.
Sherwood in the noontide answers glade and glen,
Sherwood greets bold Robin Hood and Robin's merry men.

LAUGHING LIPS [*peeping out*]. Balaam, Balaam, here

comes thy brother, the tinker. [BALAAM *looks out and wags his ears as the* TINKER *enters.*]

THE TINKER. Balaam, Balaam, my poor little donkey! Alack, alas, and well-a-day! I would go into the forest to seek thee but that I might miss the glory and the fourscore angels for arresting Robin Hood. Balaam, Balaam, alas for Balaam! [*Weeps. Enter the* ABBOT OF FURNESS.]

THE ABBOT. Almost noontide, and no sign of Sir Stephen! This forest, too, is lonely and unfitted for a man of my reverend dignity. Moreover, rumor hath it that the place is infested with godless outlaws. I fear for my moneybags, which indeed I was loath to bring hither though Sir Stephen insisted. A thousand crowns for a wedding fee is worth the while of even the Abbot of Furness. I would, however, that they were safe in the treasury at home rather than on my sumpter mule. Would too that Brother Joseph had not fallen ill at Sheffield. It is most unfitting that the Abbot of Furness should travel unattended. [*Enter* ROBIN HOOD *and* ALLAN-A-DALE.]

ROBIN HOOD. Truly, it is unfitting, Sir Abbot. Behold thy escort!

THE ABBOT. What means this, my masters? Will you dare to molest a man devoted to the service of the Mother Church, one of her poorest servants, on an errand of mercy to wed at this shrine a maiden to a noble lover?

ROBIN HOOD. What hast thou in yon bags?

THE ABBOT. Naught, naught, save a few pence for the poor and a gemel ring or so which I must wear—according to our rule—at an official ceremony.

ROBIN HOOD. We be the poor, and therefore your holiness can have no reluctance in aiding our necessity by the same few pence.

THE ABBOT. You would rob ME, the Abbot of Furness! Have a care, my masters, lest you bring upon yourselves the doom of excommunication. Moreover, I have to officiate at a wedding.

ROBIN HOOD. Fear not, Sir Abbot; thou wilt officiate,

though methinks the fee will go to enrich the noble bridegroom. If thou art conformable to our bidding, it may be thou wilt escape with thy life, and if thou art cheerful, mayhap with thy gemel rings.

THE ABBOT. You would MURDER an ABBOT OF FURNESS!

ROBIN HOOD [*sternly*]. We be desperate men. Come! [*Exeunt* ROBIN HOOD *and* ALLAN-A-DALE *with the* ABBOT. *The* TINKER, *who has drawn back during the threats of violence, stands staring after them.*]

THE TINKER. It was Robin Hood! He will be back and others will come. Then will I use my warrant!

LAUGHING LIPS. Perhaps not, ass!

THE TINKER. Who spoke? THE PLACE IS HAUNTED!

LAUGHING LIPS. By asses!

TINKER. I hear the voice again. What shall I do?

LAUGHING LIPS. Tinker, thou art doomed!

TINKER [*falling on his knees*]. Mercy, mercy, whatever thou art! I am a poor, helpless, penniless tinker! Mercy, I cry thee, mercy!

LAUGHING LIPS. Ass-eared one, beware! Mention not Robin Hood in SHERWOOD FOREST! THE PLACE IS HAUNTED! [*Enter the* FRIAR.]

THE FRIAR. Tinker, art thou here again? What did I tell thee?

TINKER. O good Friar, get thee to thy exorcism! The place is haunted! I hear a voice and see no one.

FRIAR. Thy exorcism will come with a stout hawthorn cudgel if thou be not more obedient. Get thee gone!

TINKER [*rising*]. I have lost my donkey, my little donkey! My little Balaam is gone!

FRIAR. Then get thee after him!

LAUGHING LIPS. THE PLACE IS HAUNTED! TINKER, THOU ART DOOMED! [*The* TINKER *flees.*]

FRIAR. Laughing Lips, thou art at thy tricks again.

LAUGHING LIPS [*peeping out*]. He has gone? He is an evildoer, Friar. He is trying to trap Robin.

FRIAR. Thou art a loyal heart, Laughing Lips. Why, what hast thou there? [BALAAM *peeps out.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. A donkey, Friar . . . Balaam, a poor little lost donkey.

FRIAR [*laughing*]. Keep out of mischief, asses both. There is work afoot! [*Exit* FRIAR *as* ELLEN *enters.*]

ELLEN [*sitting on the bank*]. Allan, Allan, what shall I do? O misery! O unhappy me! I may not wed the dearest, sweetest, loveliest . . .

LAUGHING LIPS. Another!

ELLEN. Who art thou?

LAUGHING LIPS. A friend. All is not lost yet. Allan-a-Dale . . .

ELLEN. Where is he? The dearest, sweetest, loveliest heart . . .

LAUGHING LIPS. Hath love no other adjectives? [*He draws back as* DAME GERTRUDE *enters.*]

DAME GERTRUDE. Weeping again, thou foolish maid? Dost thou still sigh after a penniless northern bard from no one knows where?

ELLEN. I love him.

DAME GERTRUDE. Peace, ungrateful girl! Thou wilt be lady of Trent and Castleton. Thou wilt wear kirtles of velvet and cloth of gold, not to speak of diamond chains and cloaks of miniver.

ELLEN. Can diamond chains heal a broken heart?

DAME GERTRUDE. What dost thou know of broken hearts? Here comes thy father. Dry thine eyes and weep not upon thy wedding day. [*Enter* THORKEN OF THE DALE.]

THORKEN. Weeping again, ungrateful wench? The Abbot of Furness is late, and so is our noble bridegroom. A friar here doth bid us wait within his quiet hermitage.

ELLEN. I like the bank better.

DAME GERTRUDE. Thou wilt ruin all thy bridal finery, sitting upon that moss.

ELLEN. I care not. I fain would stay.

THORKEN. Leave the willful maid, then. I catch no rheumatism for her whimseys! [*Exeunt* THORKEN *and* DAME GERTRUDE. SIR STEPHEN *enters and* ELLEN *draws back.*]

SIR STEPHEN. Thou art here alone, fair Ellen? Where are thy father and mother? The Abbot, too, seems late. Let us go within the shrine. [*He takes her hand as* ROBIN HOOD *and* ALLAN-A-DALE *enter.*]

ELLEN. Allan, Allan, save me!

ROBIN HOOD [*pushing between her and* SIR STEPHEN]. Let me look on the lass. Why, how now, sweet Ellen? There be white cheeks and tearful eyes which befit not a bonny bride. This is no right wedding. Thou art old, Sir Knight, and she is young. Moreover, thou art not her true love.

SIR STEPHEN. Out of my way, varlet! This business is none of thine. Who art thou who darest to flout Sir Stephen of Trent and Castleton?

ROBIN HOOD [*calmly*]. The lord of Sherwood, so please you, Sir Knight. Thou hast trespassed upon my domain. No maiden weds here except with my consent.

SIR STEPHEN. Out of my way, mountebank. OUT OF MY WAY!

ROBIN HOOD. No mountebank, but Robin Hood.

SIR STEPHEN [*triumphantly*]. An outlawed man! I win not only a fair bride but fourscore angels. Robin Hood, I arrest thee in the King's name!

ROBIN HOOD [*laughing*]. Count not those angels too soon! Look there and there. [ROBIN'S *men are seen peering here and there from the trees.*] My merry men will have somewhat to say to that!

SIR STEPHEN. Rascaille!

ROBIN HOOD. But rascaille who muster two hundred

strong, Sir Stephen. Allan, take thy bride within. The abbot and the curtal friar wait.

ALLAN-A-DALE. Oh, dearest, sweetest, loveliest, mine own!

LAUGHING LIPS. Who? Robin?

ALLAN [*unheeding*]. Come, my heart. Ah, all is well. [*Exeunt* ALLAN *and* ELLEN. *Enter* THORKEN.]

THORKEN. I forbid the match!

ROBIN HOOD. Thou hast no power here. The King of Sherwood claims this bride.

SIR STEPHEN [*furiously*]. This comes of consorting with the scum of Sheffield! I would have raised the maiden from the mud, but she prefers a strolling minstrel.

THORKEN. You call me scum and scorn my Ellen?

SIR STEPHEN. I would not have her now though the King of England bade me. Out of my way there [*Jostles* ROBIN HOOD.] and let your ragged crew touch me at their peril!

ROBIN HOOD. They will not touch thee save at my command. Our score shall wait and not mar a happy wedding morn. [*Exit* SIR STEPHEN.]

THORKEN. He called me scum, me, who hath wealth beyond his dreams! Not one silver penny shall he have, nor wed my Ellen.

ROBIN HOOD. Then let the course of true love run smooth at last. Allan-a-Dale is a noble lover and her fitting mate.

THORKEN [*angrily*]. She has disobeyed and thwarted me. Not one penny of mine shall she have nor enter my house again.

ROBIN HOOD. Then thou wilt have to pay round ransom, man. Twenty thousand crowns for thee and ten thousand for thy good wife.

THORKEN. Thirty thousand crowns! Thou art mad! I go at once! Gertrude, Gertrude!

ROBIN HOOD. Thou shalt not go. Look yonder! [ROBIN HOOD'S *men peer from the trees.*] I am Robin Hood!

THORKEN. Robin Hood! Thou wilt beggar me?

ROBIN HOOD. Not if thou art reasonable. Pay down thy daughter's dowry and smile upon her wedding day, and Robin Hood is not the man to mar the merrymaking.

THORKEN. In truth, thou dost leave me little choice! But how know you that I will not go back on my bargain?

ROBIN HOOD. Such is not the reputation of Thorken of the Dale. Moreover, thou wert a stalwart lover in thine own day. Wouldst thou have brooked an ancient knight for Dame Gertrude?

THORKEN [*laughing*]. I marvel not they call thee King of Sherwood, who can turn the tables thus. Well, I will hear reason, and here's my hand upon it!

[CURTAIN]

ACT III

Sherwood Forest in the Moonlight

A VOICE [*singing behind the scenes*]:

Sherwood in the moonlight, as the shadows fall.
Love has come and conquered; love is over all.
Lovers in the greenwood; fairies in the glen;
Robin Hood a-calling all his merry men.
Listen to the silver note of Robin's silver horn,
Sherwood in the moonlight, waiting for the morn.
Robin, Robin, Robin, let the echoes ring,
Robin, Robin, Robin, Sherwood greets her king!

[*Enter the* ABBOT OF FURNESS. *He rides slowly along the road and disappears, followed by* THORKEN *and* DAME GERTRUDE. *Enter* SIR STEPHEN.]

SIR STEPHEN. Outwitted by a thief! But I will have my revenge! Robin Hood had best take care, for on my faith as a belted knight, I will not rest till he has paid in full. [*Enter* ROBIN HOOD.]

ROBIN HOOD. Gramercy for thy goodwill, Sir Knight.

Now, as King of Sherwood, I would suggest that thy room is more to be desired than thy company.

SIR STEPHEN. Fellow! Thou dost insult me!

ROBIN HOOD. Were it any but a wedding day, thou couldst not trespass here with impunity. But I have promised sweet Ellen that there shall be no strife to-day. On thy peril, wait until to-morrow. [*Enter the* TINKER.]

TINKER. I have found thee! The fourscore angels are mine. Robin Hood, I arrest thee in the name of the King.

ROBIN HOOD [*calmly*]. Where is thy warrant?

TINKER. Here. Why, why, why, where is it? O Balaam, Balaam, my little donkey, has it gone to look for thee? [BALAAM *peeps out, wagging an ear.*]

LAUGHING LIPS [*peeping out*]. Ass!

SIR STEPHEN. Warrant or no warrant, we have the upper hand now. Tinker, we are two to one. Take him! [*He springs forward, but* ROBIN *steps back, winding his horn. The* TINKER *makes an effort to seize him.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. TINKER! BEWARE, THE PLACE IS HAUNTED.

TINKER [*falling on his knees*]. Mercy, mercy, I cry thee mercy! I am a poor, helpless, penniless tinker.

LAUGHING LIPS. Get thee gone or thou art but sped, man! Set foot no more in Sherwood on peril of thy life. [*The* TINKER *flees.*]

SIR STEPHEN. SCUM! Well, I need him not! I arrest thee, Robin Hood, and will bring thee bound to Sheffield.

ROBIN HOOD. I think not! [*Outside a great clatter of weapons is heard and shouts of "Robin, Robin."*]

ROBIN HOOD. Get thee gone, Sir Knight! Our quarrel shall wait another day. Thou art outmatched twenty to one. [SIR STEPHEN *glances about him, hesitates and marches out haughtily. Exit* ROBIN HOOD. *Shouts of greeting outside as* ELLEN *and* ALLAN-A-DALE *enter.*]

ALLAN. Sit here and rest, my dearest, sweetest, loveliest.

LAUGHING LIPS. Again!

ELLEN. My dearest, sweetest, loveliest!

ALLAN. My darling one, dost see the moon?

LAUGHING LIPS. It's in the sky, not hung on him.

ELLEN. Dearest, sweetest heart of mine, dost see the twinkling stars?

LAUGHING LIPS. Not in her eyes; they are above thee, man!

ALLAN. Sweeter than any star art thou, my dearest.

ELLEN. Brighter than any moon art thou, my loveliest.

LAUGHING LIPS. How about the sun?

ALLAN. Did anybody speak?

ELLEN. Not I, and yet I heard a voice within my heart that told me sunlight shone no brighter than thine eyes.

LAUGHING LIPS [*mournfully*]. A voice within her heart, forsooth!

ALLAN. Come, let us seek the recesses of the wood, where fairies trip it in the narrow glen. Come, my dearest.

ELLEN [*rising*]. Aye, my sweetest. [*They go off together.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. LOVELIEST! [*Enter* LAUGHING LIPS *and* BALAAM.]

LAUGHING LIPS. Come, Balaam, let's talk sense. Art happy, little ass? [BALAAM *nods his head.*]

LAUGHING LIPS. The play is over and the day is done. The lovers stroll beneath the moonlit trees. The merry men acclaim our Robin King of Sherwood. Thou and I, my little comrade, will dance beneath the moon. [LAUGHING LIPS *dances and* BALAAM *keeps time with tail and ears.*]

[CURTAIN]

THE NOBLE LORD *

A COMEDY

By

PERCIVAL WILDE

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CHARACTERS

HE
SHE
PETERS

THE NOBLE LORD

A secluded spot in the Maine woods in the neighborhood of a summer hotel. It is the middle of July. The trees are covered with foliage, a hot sun casts dancing shadows upon the mossy ground, and the air is full of the twittering of birds and the rustle of leaves. A winding path crosses from one side to the other, and near the center is a little clearing: the stump of a felled tree, with the lichen-covered trunk itself near it, and a patch of grassy turf. The eye cannot penetrate far through the riotously growing underbrush, but as one looks upwards, to the left, a thinning of foliage, allowing a glimpse of the sky, gives evidence of the near proximity of some small body of water.

As the curtain rises the scene is empty. There is only the song of birds, and the whisper of a gentle breeze. For a few seconds nothing else is heard. Then, suddenly, not far away, there is the sound of a splash, followed by the scream of a drowning woman, "Help! Help! Help!" There is a tremendous crashing through the underbrush, and another voice, very masculine, very English, shouts, "Where are you? Where are you?" Rather indefinitely the first speaker answers, "Here! Help! Help!" Another crashing through the underbrush, followed by a second splash, and presently, after a short pause, there enters upon the stage a tall, much bedraggled Englishman, bearing in his arms the motionless body of an extremely good-looking girl. Both of them are very wet, and a trail of water marks their progress across the scene. Reaching the clearing, the Englishman methodically deposits the girl on the ground, backs away a foot or so, and notices that his

hands are wet. He reaches into a hip pocket and draws forth a handkerchief: the handkerchief is wetter than his hands. With a gesture of vexation he throws it away, and gives his attention to the girl. He looks at her quizzically; then, rather timidly, he kneels at her side, and lays his ear over her heart. He rises promptly with a satisfied nod, carefully removes his dripping coat, folds it neatly, and places it on the log. Again he kneels, this time with his knees on either side of the girl's head, and laboriously begins to apply the Sylvester method, counting audibly as he does so. At "ten" he stops wearily, pauses, and again applies his ear to her heart. The result is evidently pleasing, and after a few more Sylvester movements, he begins to vary the procedure by removing her shoes and alternately chafing her hands and feet. Presently she sighs deeply. For the third time he pauses to listen to her heart. Slowly and deliberately her left arm rises, to encircle his neck in a confiding clasp. He sits back on his haunches, politely surprised.

SHE [*faintly*]. Mother! Mother, dear!

HE. Eh?

SHE. Mother, dear, I'm so glad—

HE [*interrupting energetically*]. Really, I beg your pardon. . . .

SHE [*continuing without a break*]. I'm so glad you've come.

HE. Ah, yes. . . . Quite so.

SHE. Kiss me, mother.

HE [*trying to rise*] Eh? [SHE *does not release him.*]

SHE. Kiss me, mother.

HE. But I'm not your mother.

SHE [*plaintively*]. Won't you kiss me, mother?

HE [*looks around furtively. Then he obliges her.*]

SHE. Ah! That's so nice. [SHE *pauses. Shudders.*] Hold me close, mother, hold me close. I've had such a terrible dream!

HE. Good Heavens! You're not dreaming now. . . .

SHE. I dreamt—I dreamt— [HE *has raised her to a sitting position. She stops abruptly. Looks about.*] Where —where am I?

HE [*surprised*]. Don't *you* know?

SHE. No.

HE [*in a matter-of-fact tone*]. We are about half a mile away from the Poland Springs Hotel, Poland Springs, Maine.

SHE [*vaguely*]. Oh! [SHE *pauses.*] And you, how do you come here?

HE. Strolling.

SHE. Strolling?

HE. I reached the hotel this morning. It was hot—beastly hot. I went for a walk in the woods.

SHE. And then?

HE. I beg your pardon?

SHE. What happened then? How did we meet?

HE. Don't *you* know?

SHE. I remember nothing—I'm confused. [SHE *tries to get up, but sits on the log with a little exclamation.*] My shoes—where are my shoes?

HE [*fetching them*]. Here they are.

SHE. Thank you. . . . [SHE *looks at them.*] Those aren't my shoes!

HE [*politely*]. No?

SHE. They're wet.

HE [*nodding*]. They would be.

SHE. But they're not mine.

HE [*shrugging his shoulders*]. I found them on your feet.

SHE [*confused*]. On my feet?

HE. Yes. . . . [*An afterthought.*] One on each.

SHE. Oh! . . . [SHE *tries to put them on.*] I can't get them on.

HE. No?

SHE. Will you help me? [HE *assists her;* SHE *feels her clothes and exclaims:*] Oh!

HE. Did I hurt you?

SHE [*astonished*]. My clothes are wet!

HE [*thoughtfully*]. Yes.

SHE. How funny! [*Noticing him.*] And you—you're wet also!

HE [*nodding*]. Soaked.

SHE. What a coincidence! How curious! How did it happen? [SHE *pauses.*] Oh, if I could only think! Think! [HE *rises, and waits politely.*] Tell me: you must know.

HE. Well, I was strolling through the woods. I heard a splash—

SHE [*interrupting*]. A splash! Oh, don't say any more: I remember! That horrible lake! Horrible! It was so warm at the hotel: I had gone off to the woods. I was sitting at the edge of the lake—on a rock—reading. I must have been sleepy. I fell in.

HE. Then you screamed.

SHE. Yes: I was drowning! Drowning! I called for help!

HE. I heard you.

SHE. I sank—I sank, oh, miles and miles! It felt as if hands were trying to pull me down to the bottom! I screamed again—and then—then—I felt a strong arm around my waist—I was dizzy—there was a roaring in my ears—I knew no more.

HE [*sympathetically*]. Too bad, too bad.

SHE. And you—[*rising to her feet enthusiastically*] you were the man who jumped in!

HE [*apologetically*]. I was passing by.

SHE. You saved my life! Oh, how can I ever thank you? My hero! [SHE *throws her arms about his neck.*]

HE. That's all right. . . .

SHE. But it's not all right. I can never repay you!

Never! Never! Not if I live to be a thousand years old! [SHE *kisses him.*]

HE [*calmly*]. That's the second time.

SHE. The second time?

HE [*nodding*]. I kissed you before.

SHE. Oh! [*Releasing him quickly.*] You didn't!

HE. Yes, I did.

SHE. While I was unconscious?

HE. Precisely.

SHE. Oh, how *could* you do such a thing? How *could* you?

HE [*taking up his coat*]. It was by request. [*Takes cigarette case from pocket.*]

SHE [*incredulously*]. I asked you?

HE. You said, "Mother! Mother! Kiss me!" [*Takes cigarette from case. Pleased to see that it is dry. Puts it between his lips.*]

SHE. I said *that?*

HE. They were your first words. [*Produces match-safe from trousers pocket.*]

SHE. But you didn't have to kiss me.

HE. No? [*Trying to strike a match. It is wet. So are the others.*]

SHE. You didn't have to!

HE. I tried to explain that I was not your mother, but you seemed to know better. [HE *throws the cigarette away.*] You insisted. I couldn't help it.

SHE [*after a pause, coquettishly*]. What do you mean: you couldn't "help it"?

HE [*perfectly willing to flirt*]. You know— [HE *hesitates.*]

SHE [*encouragingly*]. Yes?

HE. You're a pretty girl—a deucedly pretty girl.

SHE. Oh, no!

HE. But you are; honor bright!

SHE. You really think so?

HE [*nods*]. There was no one around. It was the kind of opportunity which does not present itself every day: life is *so* monotonous. And you didn't seem to object.

SHE [*coyly*]. I couldn't very well—not while I was unconscious.

HE. That's so. I am a man, with a man's tastes. And you begged me so hard—it was so inviting—well, I kissed you.

SHE [*after a pause*]. On the lips?

HE. Yes. On the lips.

SHE [*after a pause*]. How often?

HE. Eh?

SHE. How often did you kiss me?

HE. Only once.

SHE. Was that all?

HE [*with a smile*]. Why, it's hardly worth mentioning.

SHE [*going to him and taking his hands magnanimously*]. Well, I forgive you.

HE. Thank you.

SHE [*invitingly*]. Two kisses is not a great deal for saving my life.

HE. No?

SHE. I owe you much more than that!

HE [*standing motionless*]. Really?

SHE [*with her lips half an inch from his*]. Really! [*A pause.*] Really! [HE *does not kiss her.* SHE *gives it up. Sits on the log, drawing him to her side.*] You must tell me all about yourself. Just think: if it hadn't been for you, I would be at the bottom of the lake now. What a horrible tragedy that would have been: to die in such a way! . . . [SHE *pauses.*] It's natural that I should want to know something about the man who saved me from that. . . .

HE [*with embarrassment*]. I don't like to talk about myself—

SHE [*interrupting encouragingly*]. You're still a young man, aren't you?

HE. Thirty-one.

SHE [*laying her hand on his*]. Are you?

HE [*nodding*]. Last November.

SHE [*lying with the insouciance of expertness*]. I'm just twenty. [HE *nods his head, without showing the least sign of disbelief.*] Eleven years between us.

HE. Just the right ages, aren't we?

SHE [*leaving her hand where it is*]. Do you think so?

HE. Eleven years difference—ideal!

SHE. Ten and a half.

HE. Eh?

SHE. I was born in June.

HE. Oh, were you? [*Sagely.*] That's better yet.

SHE. Do you think so—Lord Brookfield?

HE [*surprised—or simulating it effectively*]. Eh?

SHE. Lord Brookfield?

HE. How on earth did you know it?

SHE [*with a laugh*]. Oh, I am not so stupid as all that!

HE. You recognized me?

SHE. No. I have never seen you.

HE. A photo?

SHE. No.

HE. Then how did you know? . . .

SHE [*interrupting*]. Lord Brookfield is a well-known man. The papers said he was coming to the hotel. I knew every other guest—

HE. But three or four others arrived this morning.

SHE. Americans.

HE. Oh!

SHE. You are English. I could see that right away.

HE [*after a pause*]. How clever of you!

SHE. Oh, Lord Brookfield!

HE. And how curious that I should meet you in this way—informal, so to speak.

SHE [*laughing*]. Odd, wasn't it? [SHE *rises.*] Ugh!—how my clothes are sticking to me!

HE. That's so. You had better change.

SHE. And you?

HE. I'm rather wet myself.

SHE. Will you take me back to the hotel?

HE. The sun is very hot here.

SHE [*instantly changing*]. Oh, would you rather stay?

HE [*does not answer for a few seconds. Then, a little abruptly*]. Tell me: can you swim?

SHE [*startled*]. Eh?

HE. Can you swim?

SHE. Lord Brookfield! Of course I can't!

HE. That's curious.

SHE. Curious?

HE. Neither can I.

SHE [*staggered, but returning to the attack with magnificent self-possession*]. Oh, but you swam splendidly! Clothes and all! All the way from the other side of the lake!

HE. Did I?

SHE. Of course you did! One plunge, and a few magnificent overhand strokes. . . . [SHE *notices his peculiar expression, and hesitates.*]

HE [*thoughtfully*]. Plunge?

SHE. Why, certainly.

HE [*shaking his head*]. I would have sworn I waded.

SHE [*laughing uneasily*]. You are really too modest, Lord Brookfield.

HE. Let's see. [HE *picks up his coat, and shakes it out.*] Of course, I might have swum, but— Ah! the water line comes only as far as the waist!

SHE. That means nothing.

HE. No? [*Feeling his head.*] If I had plunged, my hair would have been wet.

SHE. It dried in the sun.

HE. Ah, yes! But my cigarettes! [*Taking one from the case.*]

SHE. The case is waterproof.

HE. Still, the matches are wet. [*Producing the box*

from his trousers pocket, and trying to strike one.] You see?

SHE [*with a forced laugh*]. Lord Brookfield, don't deny that you saved my life!

HE. That is what I am trying to do.

SHE [*frigidly*]. I beg your pardon?

HE. I jumped in without thinking. It was the natural thing to do: I heard you scream for help. But the moment the water came to my waist I knew that if it went any deeper I should have to call for help also.

SHE. Well?

HE. I was spared that humiliation: the pond isn't over three feet deep in any place. And I waded the whole twenty feet from one end to the other. . . . And I *can't* swim.

SHE. But I was drowning! Drowning!

HE [*politely*]. Are you in the habit of drowning often?

SHE [*rising indignantly*]. Lord Brookfield!

HE. I nearly forgot to mention—

SHE. What?

HE. That I saw you jump in.

SHE. Oh!

HE. It was pleasant while it lasted, wasn't it? And romantic! Why, romantic doesn't begin to describe it! [*Imitating*] "Mother, kiss me!"

SHE. Oh, how can you?

HE. Unconscious—helpless—and you didn't remember! Not even the shoes. That was clever—very clever! And the hands trying to pull you down to the bottom: that was the touch of genius! [HE *pauses with a smile.*] Ah, well, I was willing to have a little fun. [*A man is heard whistling a popular song in the distance.* HE *listens attentively.*]

SHE [*after a pause*]. You played with me—played with me. Oh, you're disgusting! Revolting! What a thing for a *man* to do! I thought— [SHE *breaks off.*]

HE [*encouraging her to continue*]. Yes?

SHE. Nothing. . . . [*Then, seeing no reason to restrain herself.*] I thought Lord Brookfield was a gentleman!

HE. Oh, but *I'm* not.

SHE. Not a gentleman?

HE. No. . . . I'm not Lord Brookfield.

SHE. *Not* Lord Brookfield?

HE. No.

SHE. Then who on earth are you?

HE [*sweetly*]. I? I'm a friend of his.

SHE. A friend?

HE. A close friend—very close.

SHE. Who? Who?

HE [*leisurely*]. I'm not related, you know, but I see a lot of him. We're thick—very thick.

SHE [*impatiently*]. Who are you?

HE [*simply*]. I'm his valet.

SHE [*horrified*]. Oh! . . . And you kissed me! A valet! You dared kiss me!

HE. At your request.

SHE [*almost choking with rage*]. But a valet! A valet!

HE. I'm a good valet. One of the best there is.

SHE. Your insolence! Oh! [SHE *seizes the handkerchief which* HE *has left on the log, and wipes her mouth furiously.*]

HE. My handkerchief.

SHE [*throwing it to the ground*]. Oh, you coward! You . . . You— [SHE *sits on the log, inarticulate with rage. The whistle is heard again.*]

HE. Listen to me.

SHE. I won't.

HE [*earnestly*]. Listen to me.

SHE. I don't want to talk to you!

HE. I'll help you.

SHE [*rising*]. I don't want your help.

HE [*bluntly*]. Then you're silly.

SHE [*wheeling furiously*]. How dare you—

HE [*interrupting*]. I'll make a bargain with you.

SHE [*scornfully*]. What dealings can there be between us?

HE. Did you hear the whistling a minute ago?

SHE. Well?

HE [*with meaning*]. That's Brookfield.

SHE [*after a pause*]. Well?

HE. The path leads here. He is following the path—

SHE [*after still another pause*]. Well?

HE. You and I might be very good friends—

SHE [*thoughtfully*]. Oh, you mean—

HE. A valet is not paid very well—

SHE. No. . . . Still—

HE. If anything comes of it—

SHE [*slowly*]. Comes of what?

HE. You understand me. [HE *pauses; smiles. Then, in a Mephistophelian manner*]: Your clothes are still wet, aren't they?

SHE [*with full comprehension*]. Yes—

HE. Enough said! [*The whistle is heard, close at hand.*] Quick!

SHE [*going off*]. You won't tell? [HE *shakes his head.*] I'll remember you. [SHE *runs into the woods.*]

HE [*sits on the log, laughs heartily.* HE *produces another cigarette, and tries in vain to light it. -Then, as an atrocious little cockney enters whistling gayly, he addresses him sharply.*] Peters!

PETERS [*surprised*]. M'lord?

HE. Give me a light, Peters.

PETERS. Yes, m'lord. [*Produces match, etc.*]

HE. Thanks. [HE *blows a few whiffs into the air. Then stops, and surveys* PETERS *thoughtfully.*] Peters, you're a brave man, aren't you?

PETERS [*modestly*]. I *am* 'andy with me fists, m'lord.

HE. That's not quite what I mean, Peters. . . . [HE *pauses.*] Peters, you have the making of a hero in you. Something tells me that you're going to have your chance.

[*There is a loud splash from the same direction as before, followed by screams of "Help! Help!"*]

PETERS [*with excitement*]. M'lord!

HE [*quietly*]. Yes, Peters?

PETERS. Somebody's calling for 'elp, m'lord!

HE. Yes, Peters.

PETERS. Shall I go, m'lord?

HE. Yes, Peters. . . . Gallop!

And as

PETERS [*charges wildly into the shrubbery, shouting*]: H'I'm coming! H'I'm coming!

[THE CURTAIN FALLS]

MAY DAY

THE DREAM FAIRY AND THE SPIDER *

By

MARY STEWART

* Copyright, 1922, by Fleming H. Revell. From "The Land of Punch and Judy."

CHARACTERS

AUNTIE WHISKERS } *two field mice*
NIECE FURRY TAIL }
BACHELOR FROG

DREAM FAIRY, very dainty and pretty, dressed in gauzy stuff and with shining wings. She carries a distaff bearing silver thread.

WILL O' THE WISP, dressed in blue and with a tiny blue-bell for cap. His blue doublet is scalloped like a blue-bell blossom. In his hand he carries a lantern. It is very effective if this lantern can contain a tiny electric bulb. This can be attached to an equally tiny battery below the stage or be arranged with a flashlight. Any electric shop can furnish this and it adds tremendously to the effect.

SPIDER, very horrible—black spotted with red and bright green—bulging eyes. These animal characters may be purchased in almost any toy store, and moved with wires from below.

The Fairies are small dolls dressed by the Theatrical Manager. They may be moved as Puppets, which is the most life-like way, or with wires from below, like the animals. If they are Puppets be sure the stalks of Blue-bell and Milk-weed are hidden with leaves to conceal skirts of Puppets. The Dream Fairy's spinning-wheel may be made of wire, gilded and turned rapidly by wire attached to axle of wheel.

Flowers may be made of colored muslin or crêpe paper.

If this play is acted by the boys and girls themselves they can easily plan their costumes, masks and properties.

THE DREAM FAIRY AND THE SPIDER

ACT I

SCENE *laid in corner of meadow near a marsh. Flowers and grass are the size that trees would be ordinarily. Right, back, grass is scooped out to make a kind of nest, upside down, for field mice. Right, front, there are three daisies, irregular heights. Left, front, a large pink milk-weed stalk and blossom. Left, back, two lily-pads between which a frog peeps out occasionally. Center of stage is a low cowslip plant with an especially large golden blossom upon which* FAIRY SPINNER *sits while she spins. In front of her is spinning wheel. Beside her is a hanging blue-bell, concealing* WILL O' THE WISP. *Be sure all properties are placed upon green moss so that the figures will be high enough to be seen by the whole audience. If possible to arrange lights, begin with sunshine, change to sunset and then to dusk. At all events, start with golden light and change to gray twilight.*

The DREAM FAIRY *is discovered seated upon cowslip, spinning silver threads from distaff which she holds. She sings, or chants,*

DREAM FAIRY.

Spin, spin—while I dream and sing—
Rays from the sunshine, beams from the moon,
Bits of my day-dream, nights when all magic seems
Part of the wonder which streams from the moon.
Spin, spin, spin!

[*The two* MICE *appear at entrance to home and stand there listening.* FROG *peeks out from between lily-pads.*]

DREAM FAIRY.

Spin, spin, while I dream of him,
The Blue-bell, the Fairy, the Fay of my dreams.
Spinning my bridal veil, golden wheel never fail,
Bring true my dream of him, where Blue-bells lean.

AUNTIE WHISKERS [*in squeaky voice*]. Niece Furry Tail, go right back into the house! You are far too young to listen to such songs.

NIECE FURRY TAIL [*in a still more squeaky voice*]. But Aunt, she is so lovely! When I listen to her I forget about your old larder and our next meal. Instead, I want to look at the stars and listen to a frog's concert.

AUNTIE WHISKERS. Go in at once then! There is nothing more important to think of than food, and to forget it for one moment shows that you still need training as a housekeeper. [FURRY TAIL *goes in but peeps out occasionally.*]

FROG [*in deep, bass voice*]. Kerchunk! Kerchunk! Good evening, Mistress Whiskers, you are quite correct in your views upon the importance of food. If more ladies held them there would be no bachelors.

AUNTIE WHISKERS. You are a great one to talk! Why, you are worse than my niece. I heard you tell the Dream Fairy the other day that a lily bud was about to open between your green pads, and that you would give it to her for a white-and-gold home if she would become Mrs. Frog! What can you care about good food when you offer your claw to a silly scatter-brain like that, who thinks of nothing but spinning bits of fluff which are as useless as dreams or moonshine!

FROG. Kerchunk, kerchunk! I believe you are right! She told me the blossom would lose its beauty if she had to listen to my voice all day long—my voice, which is the pride of the marsh as your niece well knows!

AUNTIE WHISKERS. My niece! So you have been listening to her silly talk. Now hark! If you have anything more to do with the Dream Fairy, anything at all, you shall never see my niece again. I'll take her to another meadow. But if you behave yourself and think of sensible things like food and shelter, you shall be invited to Sunday dinner in our house; dinner cooked by my niece herself, and then you can see what she will say when you ask *her* to listen to your old songs.

FROG. It's a bargain. I'll have nothing to do with any fairies and I'll only dream of your good dinner. After all there is nothing which makes life so well worth living as being well fed. [AUNTIE WHISKERS *disappears into nest. Sun sets.*]

FROG.

Kerchunk, kerchunk, kerchee!
What a splendid froggie I be!
What a beautiful song, and all along
I dream of my dinner and tea!
Kerchunk! Kerchunk! Kerchee!

DREAM FAIRY [*softly*]. Master Frog!

FROG [*loudly and scornfully*]. Kerchunk! Kerchee! [*He dives below with a splash.*]

DREAM FAIRY [*laughing*]. What a silly old Frog! He is almost as silly as his cousin, the toad, who thinks he sees everything because his eyes pop out so far. And all the time he sees nothing but mud and worms and the bits of stone in front of him. He doesn't look up once. A toad couldn't stay an ugly toad if he looked up at a star for one moment. No more could I stay a fairy if I didn't dream in the sunset and spin my dreams into silver webs. They drift, my dreams do, to children who are gay and laughing and who believe in fairies. I wish I could make them go still farther! If only my dreams had wings! Then they would fly into the dark places where children have forgotten about the fairies or never heard of us. Sometimes I believe that if my own best dream, my Will o' the Wisp

whom I have never seen except in dreams, would come to me and love me, he might give wings to my silver webs, so they would fly to the children whose eyes are full of tears and fill them instead with twinkles! Heigh ho! I have spun so hard I am sleepy. I will sleep until the moon is high. [*As she falls asleep the petals of primrose close around her. They may be gathered with a bit of yellow silk before the play starts, and drawn easily together now. If fairy is too large to have petals drawn over her the same effect can be produced if she simply slides behind flower before it closes. Stage grows darker. Enter horrible* SPIDER.]

SPIDER [*in crawly voice*].

I creep, I creep, I crawl,
Draw gray webs over all
The shining things of life,
All beauty, great and small.
I creep, I creep, I crawl!

And this is the very swamp, I am told, in which there lives a fairy who dares spin webs of silver, webs which shine in the darkness and bring sweet dreams. Not webs like mine, which glitter only in the sunshine to catch winged creatures and which turn to gray nets when I draw the fluttering insects in and eat them—ah, ha!—eat them alive! I must find out where this fairy lives and eat her too! [SPIDER *knocks on door of* AUNTIE WHISKER'S *house.*]

FURRY TAIL [*peeping out*]. Oh, Auntie, Auntie Whiskers, do look here! Here is the most *beautiful* gentleman! I never saw any one so fine!

AUNTIE WHISKERS. Well, if it's not my old friend, Master Spider! Good evening, sir! Come right in and share our simple supper of corn fritters—unless you've brought a net of young flies along with you.

SPIDER. No, no, Mistress Whiskers, I've no time to stop to-night! I'm looking for a young fairy who, I hear, spins silver dreams—stuff and nonsense I call them! But she is becoming more popular than I am, and I'd like to catch

her in a net and sting her to death—I would! Can you tell me where she lives?

AUNTIE WHISKERS. Hush! Hush! She'll hear you and fly away. She lives very near, but I don't dare tell you where. Get your net ready and sit here until the moon rises and you will surely see her. You can't fail! Come again when you can bring some nice, white butterflies for me to help you eat, as a reward! Good luck to you! [AUNTIE WHISKERS *disappears into nest.*]

FROG [*peeping out*]. Kerchunk! Kerchunk! Good evening, Master Spider! Any fresh flies to-night, or tasty young mosquitoes? I would be glad to have supper with you.

SPIDER. No, you lazy fellow, catch your own flies. I'm out for bigger game. I'll catch and kill that Dream Fairy or never spin again, I will!

FROG. Good luck, good luck! She's a silly bit of fluff and doesn't appreciate frogs, so I hope you'll catch her. [FROG *disappears behind pads.* SPIDER *sits very quietly. Moon rises. As light falls on cowslip it opens slowly and* DREAM FAIRY *rises.*]

DREAM FAIRY. Oh, Moon, let me bathe in your silvery light! Let me see and feel nothing but your beauty and wonder, until my web is so beautiful that Will o' the Wisp will see its glimmer of magic and come to me, and teach me to spin dreams with wings! Wings—which will carry my wonder dreams through the whole world!

SPIDER. Ah! I see her now! My net shall catch her, my poisoned claw shall deal her a deadly blow! She shall fall like a captured butterfly. She shall shrivel like a dead leaf caught in my web. [*He crawls toward her and when she sees him she screams.*]

DREAM FAIRY. Oh, what a horrible creature! What wicked eyes, full of murderous light! Mistress Whiskers Mouse, save me, save me! [*She rushes to* MOUSE'S *house and* AUNTIE WHISKERS *looks out.*]

AUNTIE WHISKERS. Go away! You cannot come into

my house. We are tired of your silly songs. I hope the Spider will eat you, then you will be of some use in the world, though you wouldn't make a square meal for a mouse, you bit of thistledown—you! Go!

FAIRY [*rushes to* FROG'S *lily pad*]. Oh, Master Frog, let me hide in your lily blossom! Quick! Quick!

FROG [*looking out*]. Kerchunk! I've promised not to speak to you! I'll lose a good meal if I do. Go away!

SPIDER. Ah ha! I have you now, you weaver of dreams! I'll have no rival. My gray web shall hold you fast until you and your dreams are dead and forgotten!

DREAM FAIRY. Oh, Will o' the Wisp, Blue Fay of my dreams, where are you? [*The blue-bell opens and* WILL O' THE WISP *comes out, bearing his lighted lantern.*]

WILL O' THE WISP [*sings*]

Follow me, dance with me!
I will save you, never fear.
Listen to my merry laughter,
Crawling spiders never hear.
Come, come, come!

[*Stage has grown quite dark and* WILL'S *lantern shines out like a star. He leads* FAIRY *around stage and off to right,* SPIDER *following. They enter stage again at left;* SPIDER *does not catch up with them at first.*]

WILL O' THE WISP. Dear little Dream Fairy, will you dance with me always? First I will lead the Spider into the middle of the Marsh and lose him in a mudhole; he will follow my light, you know. Then I will fly back to you and as soon as you have spun your bridal veil we will dance to Fairy Land. Is not that your wish also?

DREAM FAIRY. Yes, dear Will o' the Wisp, please save me from that terrible Spider and then come back to dance with me! But let us not fly far away. Let us make this corner of meadow a bit of Fairy Land. As I sat spinning my dreams in the moonlight I used to wonder whether, when you came for me, you would fill my woven dreams

with magic which would give them wings. Fluttering wings which would make them fly into all the darkest spots which are full of thoughts like crawling spiders and ugly frogs and greedy mice. Our winged dreams could fill the children's minds with magic, if the dreams could only fly far enough!

WILL O' THE WISP. That is a wonderful idea! and I will scamper and fly, waving my lantern until all the stupid creatures and silly, dull, hob-goblin kind of thoughts follow me. I will lose them in the black mud of the marshes. Then your sweet, gay dreams will fly into the holes and nooks and crannies where those dark creatures lived! We will bring wonder and gayety into the mind of every child!

DREAM FAIRY. Oh, wonderful! But how will you give wings to my dreams?

WILL O' THE WISP. There is only one way. I must sprinkle Star Dust over you and your distaff. Star Dust is full of magic, but it is very hard to find. I will go in search of it and while I am gone you must hide here in this milk-weed blossom. The Spider cannot reach you, but he will find you and spin his gray web over you. Then you will have to wait, little Fairy, all sealed up, until I come back and the starry light falls upon you—and you come forth with your distaff full of winged dreams. Can you be patient while the Spider spins his web? Will you stay hidden until I return?

DREAM FAIRY. Yes, I will, I will! Hide me quickly though and hurry away, or I shall grow afraid and fly with you!

WILL O' THE WISP. Here, little Fairy, hide in this pink blossom. Hold my hand and climb—so! [FAIRY *climbs into blossom, and crouches down.*] Be patient, little Love; if you are not you can never spin another dream! [*Exit* WILL. *Enter* SPIDER.]

SPIDER. Where is my prey? Ah, I think she is hidden here! [*He sits below blossom, then crawls part way up stem and throws webs over flower. In the moonlight this*

can be easily managed by pulling gray worsted over the blossom with an invisible wire.]

SPIDER [*sings or mutters*].

Creepy, crawly, here I come,
Naught shall live within my loom.
Every silver ray is gone,
Every dream to shreds is torn,
Creepy, creepy, crawl!
[*Crawls away muttering*].
Creepy, crawly, she is—*dead.*
Naught can live or lift its head
Where I creep and crawl—creep and crawl!

ACT II

Same scene, before dawn. Enter WILL O' THE WISP *with lantern.*

WILL O' THE WISP. Alas, alas! I have hunted in vain for the Star Dust and without it I can never save my little Love, can never give her beautiful dreams the wings for which she has suffered so long, sealed up in this gray net of the wicked spider! She trusts me, she has kept so still. She must know that if she should tear this net to tatters, if she should save herself now without the Star Dust, she could never spin again. She is so patient, poor little fairy, and I have searched until my wings can fly no longer and my light is dim! [*His light goes out as he sinks upon moss at foot of milk-weed. Stage grows lighter.* DAISIES *at right begin to flutter in breeze.*]

WILL O' THE WISP [*starting up*]. Hark, what are the daisies saying?

DAISIES.

We are the Star Blossoms,
Fallen of old!
Our hearts hold the Star-dust
Our petals enfold
Star-dust of wonder and light!

WILL O' THE WISP [*springing toward them*]. Daisies, daisies, is it really true? Have you the Star Dust? I have been to Moon Land and Fairy Land, to the Stars themselves and through the Milky Way,—in vain! And now do you, you lovely things growing right in our home meadow, hold the magic which I have sought for so far?

DAISIES [*nodding*]. We do, we do, we do!

WILL O' THE WISP. Here, here, fill my hands with the precious dust! Think of my Fairy Love bound beneath the Spider's web! Save her and give her dreams the wings for which she longs! For her sake and for the children's sake, dear daisies, help us, help us!

DAISIES. Laughter and magic and wonder to the world, woven by your dreams and your love! Star Dust you ask to give such dreams wings? We give, and give, and give! [WILL O' THE WISP *stands with back to audience and hands outstretched; music, while glittering snow powder* (*sold for Christmas trees*) *sifts slowly upon him. Before he turns back his lantern is again lighted.* WILL O' THE WISP *runs to* MILK-WEED *and waves lantern. Bright light falls on blossom. Star Dust* (*Snow Powder*) *covers it also.*]

WILL O' THE WISP. The magic light of the Star Dust—it is everywhere! Wake, little Fairy Weaver! Tear the Spider's web to tatters, come to me! Come! come! [DREAM FAIRY *slowly appears, shining with Star Dust. She joins* WILL O' THE WISP *and suddenly the air is full of the silvery blossoms of the milk-weed blown across the stage. If impossible to obtain this, soft white floss, well raveled, will answer.*]

DREAM FAIRY. My dreams, my dreams! See them fly! You have filled them with life, you have given them wings! They will fly everywhere, telling children of the wonder and beauty of life!

WILL O' THE WISP. The Star-dust has filled them with magic, little Love! The children's eyes will be full of twinkles, of starry laughter—all dullness and meanness will shrivel up like the Spider's web.

DREAM FAIRY. But see, Star-dust has fallen upon that

horrid web and changed it to shining silver! I shall use it for my wedding veil! And together we will fill the world with the magic and wonder of our Fairy Dreams!

DREAM FAIRY AND WILL O' THE WISP [*together*].

Shine, shine, Star-dust and wonderment!
Twinkles will fly to the children who wait.
Laughter and merriment, sweet dreams by magic sent,
Watch—here's a dream for you, your golden fate!

[CURTAIN]

A GARDEN CINDERELLA *

A PLAY IN TWO ACTS FOR CHILDREN

By

EDITH BURROWS

* Copyright, 1919, by The Penn Publishing Company.

CHARACTERS

Spirit of the Garden	Buttercup
West Wind	Daisy
Green Worm (Luna Moth)	Moonbeam
Rose	Fireflies
Lily	Rainbow Fairies
Forget-me-not	Flowers of the Garden

Note.—The parts may all be taken by girls, or boys may be used for the parts of West Wind, Moonbeam and Fireflies.

Scene. A Garden.
Time. Midnights of two successive summers.
Time of Playing. One hour.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The Spirit of the Garden gives a party—and the fairest guest is to be chosen Queen of the Garden. The Flowers laugh at the little Green Worm, who wishes to go. But when the party is given a beautiful Luna Moth is the fairest guest—and she was once the little Green Worm—a garden Cinderella.

COSTUMES

SPIRIT OF THE GARDEN wears a straight Greek dress of white, caught with small flowers. She carries a silver scepter wreathed with small flowers and vines, and tipped with a silver butterfly. On her head is a silver crown, with which she later crowns the Luna Moth as Queen.

WEST WIND (*a small boy may take this part*) wears a loose smock-like garment of sky-blue. On this are fastened many small fluffs of white cotton to suggest white clouds on a blue sky. The cap is round and close fitting, of sky-blue, with golden wings, and on the feet are worn golden winged sandals.

GREEN WORM wears in Act I a long tight green bag, which fastens under her chin, and allows her only sufficient freedom of motion to wriggle a bit as she lies on the ground. A close-fitting green cap, fastening under her chin, conceals the hair completely. In Act II, as the Luna Moth, she stands erect, and wears a long, straight robe of white, with large and beautiful wings of pale green, faintly bordered with lavender. (*See picture of Luna Moth, which may be found in any public library.*)

FLOWERS (*any number desired*) all wear long, straight robes of green, representing stems, and crêpe paper caps, which frame their faces in imitation of the particular flowers they represent. The cap of the Rose is pink; Lily, white; Forget-me-not, blue; Buttercup, yellow; Daisy, white and yellow, etc.

MOONBEAM (*a small boy may take this part*) wears a little elf-suit of white, covered with sparkling dust (*imitation snow*) and a close white cap, also gleaming with "moonshine." He carries a ball of silver cord. (*If a girl takes this part, a costume evolved from a silver spangled scarf is lovely.*) In Act II the Moonbeam must carry a long silvery cloak on one arm.

RAINBOW FAIRIES (*six or more*) wear conventional fairy costumes of delicately shaded thin material in hues of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. Each fairy has a thin scarf of cloud-gray attached to her fingers, and these are kept in constant motion during the dance of the fairies.

FIREFLIES (*six or more; small boys may take these parts*) wear elf-suits of dark gray, with close-fitting caps like the Worm's, which show only the faces. They wear queer little winglike capes, which are divided in the center back and wired around the edges, and stand out like two little wings. Each Firefly carries an electric torch, which is frequently flashed.

PROPERTIES

For SPIRIT OF THE GARDEN: A silver scepter and a silver crown (see above).

For MOONBEAM: A ball of silver cord. For this dip a yard or two of twine in silver paint, and also paint the outside of the ball of twine. Or use Christmas tree "tinsel" of silver color. "Moonbeam" also carries a long silvery cloak (see above), and has a "silver letter," to

be made by enclosing a sheet of silver paper in an envelope folded from the same material.

For West Wind: A roll of stiff paper, about 10 by 15 inches (supposed to be a royal proclamation, on parchment). It should have heavy writing on it, and a seal.

For Rainbow Fairies: Gray scarfs (see above.)

For Fireflies: Very small electric torches—small enough to be hidden in the hand, if possible.

Heard off Stage: Bell or chimes, on which the hour of twelve is struck.

SCENE PLOT

Scene, the Garden—the same in both acts. A garden drop scene or simply a green curtain at the rear. Wood wings at R. and L., or, if painted scenery is not available, dress the stage with masses of foliage, potted plants, bay trees in tubs, etc., leaving spaces for entrances and exits. Up C. is a raised platform with a garden bench.

A GARDEN CINDERELLA

ACT I

SCENE—*the Garden. The Flowers stand in stiff rows on either side of the center path which leads up to a raised bench in the rear. Down L. C. near the path lies the* GREEN WORM, *at first unnoticed. As the curtain rises there is no sound or motion among the Flowers; then a clock slowly chimes the hour of midnight, and a soft rustle of life stirs through the Garden. Music sounds, and the Flowers sway on their stems. As the music ceases a Flower speaks:*

FLOWER.

'Tis the happy hour
When the Flowers are free,
And for gay adventure
Have our liberty,—
Hour when our colors
Loveliest you see;
When our fragrance rare is—
Sweetest that can be!

ROSE. Do you know, Sisters, I feel that to-night something is going to happen?

LILY. O Rose, Sister Rose, do tell us, pray; how do you feel it?

ROSE [*slowly and uncertainly*]. I feel it . . . I feel it . . . I think I feel it in my leaves. [*Shaking foliage. With a rush, the gay and dashing* WEST WIND *enters L., and blows down path to center front.*]

WEST WIND [*blowing*]. Whoo-ee! Who-ee! Clear the way!

I'm the gay West Wind, and I've traveled long,
Far and wide and high and low.
I never get tired of bringing fair skies,
And storms run away when I blow!

[*Here a dainty little dance is executed by the* WEST WIND *and the* FLOWERS. *To the music, he makes light and swift rushes toward the* FLOWERS, *who sway away from his breezy advances and bow to each other. At the close of this dance the* WEST WIND *again speaks.*]

WEST WIND [*down R., blowing*]. Hail, gentle Flowers! Because I was blowing this way to-night, the fair Garden Spirit entrusted me with a message for you . . .

FLOWERS [*interrupting*]. Let us hear it; let us hear it!

WEST WIND. Whoo! Hush! Patience, ladies, patience! [*With provoking repetition.*] As I was saying, the fair Garden Spirit . . .

LILY [*finishing for him*]. "Entrusted you with a message." We know that. Now [*with a grand air*] kindly tell us the message, without more ado!

WEST WIND [*indignantly*]. Whoo! Well, I never did! Hush! Whoo! Hush! [*He rushes toward C., along the line of the flowers, blowing directly at the* LILY, *who bends before his breezy rush. He keeps on and pauses down L.*]

ROSE. Goodness me, but you are rough, Mr. West Wind!

WEST WIND [*much offended*]. I'm sure I don't see how I'm to blame for this; but since you can't listen politely to the message, you can just do without it! I'm going—whoo! [*Preparing to blow away, he crosses to R.*]

FORGET-ME-NOT [*softly*]. Please don't go, West Wind. My sisters didn't mean to be rude; truly they didn't. Why, all the Flowers love the West Wind. It's only that we're all so eager to hear your news. Isn't it, Sisters? [*To* ROSE *and* LILY, *who nod "yes" in reply.*]

WEST WIND [*down R., mollified*]. Well, perhaps I was hasty, too. [*Importantly.*] The fair Garden Spirit, know-

ing that I was blowing this way to-night, entrusted me with a message. [*He glances around to make sure that he isn't going to be interrupted again.*] She bids you all prepare for a great party, which she will give you exactly one year from to-night, here in the Garden. [*He pauses.*]

FLOWERS [*rapturously*]. Oh! Oh! Oh!

WEST WIND. But I haven't finished yet. [*Immediately respectful silence among the* FLOWERS.] The best part is . . . is . . . [*mischievous pause for effect*] . . . is that on that night the Garden Spirit will choose the fairest among her guests to be Queen of the Garden. [*Dramatically.*] Now talk! [*He pirouettes across stage to L. and back to R.*]

FLOWERS [*breaking into excited questions, though they do not leave their places*].

A year from to-night?
At midnight?
The fairest guest to be Queen?
May anybody come?
Oh, are you sure it's not a joke?

WEST WIND [*hands on his ears*]. Mercy! How can I answer you all at once? The safest thing for me to do is to blow away before you can ask me anything more. The answer to all those questions is "Yes!" [*He starts blowing off-stage to the R., but is called back by the* ROSE.]

ROSE. West Wind, are you blowing toward the foot of the Rainbow to-night?

WEST WIND. That's just where I'm wafting now, to visit the Crock of Fairy Gold.

ROSE [*to the* FLOWERS]. O Sisters, shall we consult our little Fairy friends about our new clothes for next year's party?

FLOWERS [*clapping hands softly*]. Yes, yes!

ROSE [*to* WEST WIND]. Then, as you blow to the Crock of Gold, West Wind, will you ask the Rainbow Fairies to come here to-night?

WEST WIND [*getting under way*]. Whoo! Hush! Yes!

Whoo-ee! I'll ask them! [*Exit in breezy fashion, R. To all this the* WORM *has been eagerly listening.*]

FORGET-ME-NOT [*clasping her hands*]. Oh, isn't it exciting?

LILY [*trying to appear rather bored*]. Rather, but, of course, there's not much doubt as to who will be Queen. [*Preening herself consciously.*] All the Fairy Queens in stories are tall and robed in white!

ROSE [*tartly*]. Yes, except those who are robed in colors!

FLOWERS. Yes, indeed! Hear, hear!

FORGET-ME-NOT [*quite distressed*]. Oh, please don't quarrel, Sisters. The party is just too lovely; don't spoil it!

DAISY [*timidly*]. Did West Wind say that all Garden Folk were invited to the party?

BUTTERCUP. Yes, and that means even you and me. Of course, our clothes are very simple [*more hopefully*]; but we can manage to look very well in a quiet way.

LILY [*sniffing*]. Really! Some people do not know their place in this Garden.

FORGET-ME-NOT. Please!

WORM [*down L., slowly turning and lifting her head toward* BUTTERCUP]. Are you sure West Wind said that all the Garden Folk were invited to the party?

BUTTERCUP [*indifferently*]. Quite sure.

WORM [*ecstatically*]. Then I—even I may go!

FLOWERS [*first horrified, then amused at the idea*]. You! You!! [*They laugh very heartily.*]

LILY [*haughtily*]. Mercy, what presumption! I'm sure I don't know what this Garden is coming to!

ROSE [*scornfully*]. What are you thinking about, Worm? You can't go to that party!

WORM [*with unexpected courage*]. Why not?

ROSE. Why, you've nothing to wear that's fit for a party.

LILY [*in disgust*]. I should think not!

FLOWERS. And we're all going to have wonderful new gowns!

DAISY. Yes, even Buttercup and I are getting new clothes for the event, and who ever heard of a Worm having nice clothes? [FLOWERS *all laugh scornfully.*]

WORM [*down L., sadly, quite crushed*]. I never thought about clothes. I just wanted to have a pleasant time with you all.

FORGET-ME-NOT [*kindly*]. Never mind, Worm. Maybe the green Rainbow Fairy will help you with a new dress. You know the Rainbow Fairies are coming to help us choose our party clothes.

WORM [*quite hopelessly*]. Oh, no! I should never think of asking a Fairy to bother with me.

LILY [*emphatically*]. I should hope not! A worm, indeed!

FORGET-ME-NOT [*pointing off R.*]. Hush! The Rainbow Fairies! [*To the sound of soft Fairy dance music the exquisite little* RAINBOW FAIRIES *appear R., forming a rainbow as they enter. Dancing lightly, and keeping their scarfs constantly in motion, they beckon to the* FLOWERS, *who for the first time leave their fixed places in the Garden and cluster eagerly about the* FAIRIES *as the dance ends.*]

A RAINBOW FAIRY.

Garden Flowers, Garden Flowers,
Since you are seeking
Each lovely hue;
Rainbow Fairies, Rainbow Fairies,
While yet you're speaking,
Bring them to you!

LILY. Greetings and thanks, Fairy friends. We prize your arts and all your Fairy wares. What have you brought?

RAINBOW FAIRIES [*one by one calling out their wares, like venders*].

Red—bright, beautiful red of leaping flames!

Orange—taken from the sunset sky!

Yellow—golden yellow, like the sunbeams!
Green—soft, cool green of summer grasses!
Blue—wonderful blue of a June sky!
Violet—like dew-drenched spring flowers!

RAINBOW FAIRIES [*together*]. Come, come [*beckoning* FLOWERS *off-stage, R.*], come with us to see! [*As they exeunt R., to music of Fairy Dance, repeated, the* WORM *watches them wistfully, then slowly crawls down C., sighing.*]

WORM. Oh, dear! Oh, dear!! Oh, dear!!! [*Enter L. during this action a* MOONBEAM, *bearing the silver moon-thread. He advances L. C. toward the* WORM *and speaks.*]

MOONBEAM [*gently*]. What's the matter, little Worm?

WORM [*down C.*]. I'm sad because the Garden Spirit is going to give a party to all the Garden Folk, and I can't go!

MOONBEAM. Why can't you go, little Worm? [MOONBEAM *stoops to the* WORM.]

WORM. Because I've nothing fit to wear, and all the Flowers laughed at me when I suggested going. [*Overcome with grief again.*] Oh, dear! I do so want to go to that party!

MOONBEAM [*quietly*]. And you shall go! [*As the* WORM *looks up startled and incredulous, he goes on.*] Yes, I mean it. Your Fairy Godmother, the Moon, knows all about that party, and she sent me to give you this moon-thread and a message from her. [*He hands the moon-thread to the* WORM.]

Here's a silver Moonbeam fair,
Silken cobweb, too,
Fashioned in a thread to bring
Happiness for you.
Spin patiently,
Weaving to and fro,
Till a cloak of magic will
Banish all your woe!

WORM [*rapturously*]. How can I ever thank you, kind Moonbeam? [*A noise of laughter is heard near the Garden, R.*]

MOONBEAM [*finger to lips*]. Hush! not a word. I hear the Flowers returning. Just weave your magic cloak, put it on, and then—[*mysteriously*] wait! [*The* MOONBEAM *steals softly out L. as* FLOWERS, FAIRIES, *and* FIREFLIES *enter at right. Music sounds, and as* FLOWERS *resume their fixed places in rows,* FAIRIES *and* FIREFLIES *dance together, the latter frequently flashing their lights. As the dance ends,* FAIRIES *take positions R. and* FIREFLIES *go to L., sinking down in front of* FLOWERS. FORGET-ME-NOT *then speaks.*]

FORGET-ME-NOT. It was good of you to see us safely home again, little Fireflies. Thank you. [*In a sleepy voice.*] Ooh! I'm so tired!

ROSE. So am I. Isn't it time for our beauty-sleep now?

LILY. Yes, now that with the Fairies' help we've planned our lovely new gowns, I think we'd better get all the rest we can before the party.

FORGET-ME-NOT [*sleepily*]. The Fireflies will be our Garden Watchmen and keep us safe. Won't you, Fireflies? [*The* FLOWERS *sway drowsily, closing their eyes, and there follows "The Firefly Lullaby," to the tune, "Sleep, Baby, Sleep."*]

FIREFLIES [*softly*].

Rest, Flowers, rest,
We're Garden Watchmen best.
We'll flash our lanterns high and low,
[*Illustrating by action*]
But never from the Garden go.
Rest, Flowers, rest;
Rest, Flowers, rest.

FULL CHORUS [*very drowsily*].

Dream, Flowers, dream
Of moonlight night agleam,

When from your sleeping you'll awake,
And part in Fairy revels take.
Dream, Flowers, dream;
Dream, Flowers, dream.

[CURTAIN]

ACT II

SCENE, *as in Act I. A clock chimes the twelve strokes of midnight, and to the strain of music which follows, the curtain rises, disclosing the* FLOWERS *arranged in the Garden as at the beginning of Act I. The* WORM *is missing from the scene. The* FLOWERS *begin to sway and move to the music, at the end of which a* FLOWER *speaks.*

A FLOWER.

All the Garden Flowers
Gay apparel wear,
And to highest hoping
Flower hearts will dare.
Now the hour approaches
For our pleasure rare;
Moments bring her nearer,
Garden Spirit fair!

LILY [*looking around patronizingly*]. Well, well, how pretty you all look to-night! Your colors make such a fine setting for my white splendor.

DAISY [*forgetting herself*]. I, too, wear white!

LILY [*to* ROSE]. Who is that Flower who just spoke to me? Really, this Garden is getting so full of all kinds of Flowers that I simply don't know half of them any more.

ROSE. That was the Daisy. Just a Wild Flower, but a nice little thing.

LILY. Indeed! [*Sniffing.*] The idea of a Wild Flower comparing her gown to mine.

ROSE [*flippantly*]. Oh, well, "a cat may look at a king," you know. [*Slyly.*] But I do think she was silly to make such a fuss over a white dress—now if it were only a glowing color like mine, the Garden Spirit would be far more likely to notice it.

LILY [*angrily*]. Nonsense!

FORGET-ME-NOT [*hastening to avert a quarrel*]. O Sisters, have you noticed that the Worm has gone?

ROSE. Gone? I should hope so!

FORGET-ME-NOT [*remembering*]. The poor little thing! She wanted so much to come to the party. I don't suppose she has many good times. I'm sorry that we didn't let her come.

LILY [*sharply*]. Don't be absurd! The wretched little thing has nothing decent to wear, and she would have disgraced the whole Garden. Goodness! what's happening? [*A breeze seems to be affecting all the* FLOWERS. *They sway gracefully on their stems, and bend quite low before the current of air. Enter the* WEST WIND, *down R.*]

WEST WIND [*blowing*]. Whooee—whooee! Make way, make way for her Majesty, the Garden Spirit! [*He begins to move backward toward center of stage, bowing as he goes. Music sounds, and following* WEST WIND *appears the* GARDEN SPIRIT *at R., moving slowly and with great dignity.* WEST WIND *escorts her to the throne up C., while all the* FLOWERS *bow deeply as she passes. Standing before the throne, the* GARDEN SPIRIT *moves her silver scepter, and the* FLOWERS *move from their set positions and cluster up R. and L. near the throne, leaving a cleared space C., where the various claimants for honor present themselves and where the dances indicated take place.*]

GARDEN SPIRIT.

I come to give you greeting,
Greeting, Flowers fair.
'Tis a merry, merry meeting,
Meeting that we share.
To-night we'll all be glad and gay,

We'll banish all our cares away;
For, I come to give you greeting,
Greeting, Flowers fair!

FLOWERS. Hail, Spirit, hail! [*All bow.*]

GARDEN SPIRIT. Thanks, Flowers of the Garden, for your lovely welcome. Your beauty delights us; and your fragrance is an exquisite tribute. [*Seating herself on the throne, and motioning* WEST WIND *to a place near her up L.*] Now, my loyal and lovely subjects, we are ready for the difficult task of selecting the fairest guest from an assembly where all are so fair. West Wind, read our royal proclamation.

WEST WIND [*unrolling a parchment and reading in the loud monotone of a court herald*]. Hear ye! Hear ye! Whereas we, the Spirit of the Garden, have appointed this night as a time for the choosing of the fairest guest among all the Garden Folk for Queen of the Garden; and whereas the time appointed is at hand, we, the Spirit of the Garden, do in our royal person and by our royal seal of authority, command all claimants for such honor to appear presently before us and urge their claims. Hear ye! Hear ye! [*The* FLOWERS *are so impressed by the proclamation that, for a moment, while* WEST WIND *rolls up his parchment, there is silence.*]

GARDEN SPIRIT. You have heard our royal will. We are waiting.

LILY [*stepping forward into open space, and bowing before throne*]. Your Gracious Majesty, it hardly seems necessary for me to call to your attention facts which every one knows; but I urge you to consider my undoubted claims to be Queen, because of my slender height, my purity of hue, and my overwhelming fragrance.

WEST WIND [*aside*]. Overwhelming conceit!

GARDEN SPIRIT. We note carefully what you say, beautiful Lily. [LILY *bows and resumes her place among the* FLOWERS *up R.*]

ROSE [*coming forward up L., with almost as much as-*

surance, and bowing]. My claims to be Queen, Your Majesty, may not appear as undoubted [*glancing toward* LILY] as those of my Sister Flower, but I do beg you to remember my lovely hues, my perfect perfume, and, above all, my enormous popularity, which surely fit me for such a position!

WEST WIND [*aside*]. Enormous nerve!

GARDEN SPIRIT. We consider deeply all your claims, lovely Rose. [ROSE *bows low and resumes her place among the* FLOWERS. *There is a perceptible pause, during which no* FLOWER *advances to the throne. All glance uneasily at one another, until the* GARDEN SPIRIT *speaks again, rather impatiently.*] Well, well [*tapping with her scepter on the throne*], why don't some of you others speak up and state your claims? Are you tongue-tied?

FORGET-ME-NOT [*modestly coming forward up R., and curtseying deeply before the throne*]. If you please, Your Gracious Majesty, I think perhaps the rest of the Flowers may be too modest to make any claims. Couldn't you just judge us yourself, without our pleading our cause?

WEST WIND [*aside*]. There speaks the only really unselfish Flower in the whole Garden.

GARDEN SPIRIT [*kindly*]. Perhaps that would be better. For your suggestion, fair Forget-me-not, we thank you; and while we are making our decision, we will summon some of your friends to entertain you. [*She waves her scepter.* FORGET-ME-NOT *bows and returns to the* FLOWERS *up R. Dance music sounds, and from R. and L. the* FIREFLIES *and* RAINBOW FAIRIES *trip lightly on and take part in a dainty little dance. The* FLOWERS *watch the dance, and the* GARDEN SPIRIT *watches the* FLOWERS, *sometimes whispering to the* WEST WIND, *who shakes or nods his head from time to time. The dance ceases, and* FAIRIES *and* FIREFLIES *move L. and R. of the* FLOWERS *respectively, as the* GARDEN SPIRIT *and the* FLOWERS *applaud them. The* GARDEN SPIRIT *rises and speaks.*]

GARDEN SPIRIT [*waving scepter to ensure silence*]. Be-

fore we state our decision as to the choice of Garden Queen, let us ask one question. Are all of the Garden Folk present?

FLOWERS [*eagerly*]. Yes, yes, Your Majesty!

GARDEN SPIRIT [*gravely*]. You are sure that no one has been left out?

FLOWERS. Yes, yes, Your Majesty!

FORGET-ME-NOT [*softly*]. Only the— [*She is about to say* "WORM," *but is checked by the angry* LILY.]

LILY [*to* FORGET-ME-NOT, *furiously*]. Be still! Do you wish to ruin everything?

GARDEN SPIRIT [*not having heard* FORGET-ME-NOT]. Then, since you are sure that all the Garden Folk are here, we will tell our royal decree. West Wind, proceed. [*The stillness is intense.*]

WEST WIND [*again with the monotone of a Herald*]. Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye! By royal decree, the Queen of the Garden is to be— [*Here he is interrupted by a call off-stage. "Wait!" And the* MOONBEAM *rushes on L., bearing over one arm a long silvery cloak, and with the other hand holding out toward the* GARDEN SPIRIT *a folded silver letter.*]

MOONBEAM [*breathlessly*]. Wait, oh, wait, your Gracious Majesty! Before you announce your decision, you should know that one of your Garden Folk is not yet here. [*He approaches the throne and kneels.*]

GARDEN SPIRIT. How can that be? I have just been assured by the Flowers that they were all present.

MOONBEAM [*with meaning emphasis*]. All the Flowers may be present; but I still maintain that there is yet one belated guest, and until her arrival, I beg of you to delay your decision as to who shall be Garden Queen. In proof of my statements, Your Royal Majesty, I tender you a letter from my mother, the Moon. [*The* MOONBEAM *hands the folded silver letter to the* GARDEN SPIRIT, *and then bows himself away toward the L. side of stage. As the* GARDEN SPIRIT *reads the letter, "Butterfly Dance" music is heard, and from the direction in which the* MOONBEAM *has*

been anxiously looking, the lovely LUNA MOTH *dances lightly in L, crosses to up R. C., and slowly waving her beautiful wings, stands before the astonished assembly.*]

MOONBEAM [*triumphantly*]. The belated guest, Your Majesty! I present to you the Luna Moth! [*The* MOTH *bows with extreme grace, and the* GARDEN SPIRIT *returns the bow.*]

LUNA MOTH.

I am so glad that I can be here,
To greet my friends once more.
Now, unashamed, I can stand forth,
By magic Fairy lore!

[*She dances again to the music of the "Butterfly Dance," while all present, lost in admiration, watch her. She pauses down R. As the music ceases,* FLOWER *voices break the silence.*]

ROSE. What can she mean by "greeting her friends once more"? In the Garden we never knew any one half so lovely.

LILY. I'm going to ask her. She's a person who is obviously worth cultivating! [*Approaching* LUNA MOTH *with unusual humility.*] Beautiful stranger—

LUNA MOTH [*gently but firmly*]. Just a moment. I have not yet paid my respects to our hostess. [*Addressing the* GARDEN SPIRIT.]. Fair and Most Gracious Majesty, you and the Moonbeam alone know how greatly I am enjoying your hospitality. From my heart, I thank you!

GARDEN SPIRIT. We are more than glad to welcome such a beautiful and distinguished guest.

FLOWERS [*heartily*]. Yes, yes! All honor to her!

GARDEN SPIRIT. All honor indeed! Therefore, O lovely belated guest, we decree that you and you only shall be the Garden Queen!

FLOWERS. Hear! Hear! Hail to our Queen! [*Music sounds, during which the* GARDEN SPIRIT *comes down R. toward the* LUNA MOTH, *and leads her to the throne. She then takes the crown from her own head and with it crowns*

the new Queen. GARDEN SPIRIT *stands at R. of throne,* WEST WIND *at L. The music ceases.*]

FLOWERS. Hail! Hail! Hail, O lovely Queen. [LUNA MOTH *sits on throne up C.*]

LILY [*whose crushed hopes make her the one faintly dissenting voice*]. But, is it fair to crown an outsider Queen of our Garden? [*There is a murmur among the* FLOWERS.]

LUNA MOTH [*gently*]. I am not an outsider.

LILY [*going to her former position up R.*]. Oh, pardon me, but I have an excellent memory for distinguished people, and I cannot recall you as ever having lived in the Garden!

LUNA MOTH [*dryly*]. Probably not. No, your memory for distinguished people would certainly not include me! [*Suddenly.*] Permit me to remind you of the Green Worm.

LILY. The Green Worm? But what has that poor ugly little thing to do with you?

LUNA MOTH. Simply this: I am the Green Worm! The only difference between us, really, is a matter of clothes, and that my Fairy Godmother, the Moon, attended to by giving me a thread, with which I wove a magic cloak. [*The* MOONBEAM *holds up the silvery cloak.*] When I put on this cloak, it worked a transformation: so now you know me as I really am—a Garden Cinderella! [*As the* LUNA MOTH *finishes her last speech, the "Butterfly Dance" music is again heard, and, waving her wings, she floats slowly down from the throne, through the ranks of deeply bowing* FLOWERS, *to center front of stage, and addressing the audience as the music ceases, speaks the Epilogue.*]

Epilogue

Our thanks, good friends, for listening so kindly to our play.
To point a moral to our tale, one more word we must say:
In judging by appearances, and nothing else, you'll find
It isn't wise; it isn't safe; it's rarely ever kind!

[*Repeat the Dance of the Rainbow Fairies and Fireflies as curtain falls.*]

[CURTAIN]

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY *

By

S. LYLE CUMMINS

* From "Plays for Children," by S. Lyle Cummins. Copyright, 1923, Doubleday, Doran & Company, publishers.

CHARACTERS

FIELD MOUSE
OWL
PRINCE
NURSE
SLEEPING BEAUTY

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

SCENE: *A Forest at morning. The* OWL *is seen half asleep, amongst the leaves to right.*
Enter a FIELD MOUSE.

MOUSE.
I've been here seven weeks
That's a very long time
And I watch her each day
As the branches I climb!
She just lies there asleep!
Without bite, without sup!
How on earth does she live?
Will she never wake up?

OWL.
Little creature, the lady's protracted repose
Is a puzzle defying solution by those
Who, like you and the flowers, are but things of the Hours!
It requires a long life and mature meditation
To be able to furnish the true explanation.
In a century passed, but I won't mention which,
This young lady's great Aunt, who was also a witch,
Settled down in the wild
With the Nurse and the Child;
And commenced, far removed from disturbing relations,
To write her great book on Quadratic Equations.

MOUSE.
What a word!

OWL. Yes, indeed! You are wise not to try it!

But you'll easily see that one needs *perfect* quiet
To write books of that kind.
Well, I'm rather inclined
To think the Witch showed a marked want of ability
In bringing a child, when she yearned for tranquillity!
I suggest that she partly deserved her sad fate—
Which arrived pretty quickly—for early and late
There was nothing but banging and whizzing and whirring,
Loud crunching of sweets and low pussycat purring,
And the thousand strange noises that children delight in
Till the wood was a place to go mad—*not* to write—in!

MOUSE.

And what happened?

OWL. Her plight
Was impossible; quite!
She endured it five, seven, nine days . . . On the tenth,
When absorbed in the value of *N* to the *N*th,
And just as she'd got it all clear in her brain
A voice said, "Dear Aunt, will you please *be a train?*"
The rejoinder was such as to make one's flesh creep;
Just simply three terrible words—"*Go to . . . sleep!*"
And the poor child turned round without protest or wince;
She went straight to her bed and has slept ever since.
What is funnier still, so intense was the spell
It affected Nurse, Cat and Canary as well,
And in silence, at last, without bang, whizz or whirr,
The witch finished her book—and the book finished her!

MOUSE.

And the child?

OWL. She remains, through her Aunt's incantation,
In a state of suspended, or fixed, animation;

And she always *will* sleep, as she's slept ever since
Until kissed on the nose by a young Fairy Prince.

MOUSE.
On the nose?

OWL. Yes, the *nose!*

MOUSE. Goodness gracious, that's queer.
But . . .

OWL. Be silent! A footstep!

MOUSE. Hush; some one draws near.

[*The* MOUSE *dives into the hedge. Enter the* FAIRY PRINCE.]

PRINCE [*searching for a path*].
Blocked again! Why, this isn't a pathway at all—
Just a blind mass of bushes as thick as a wall—
Well, I can't go ahead and I *will not* turn back
So here goes for a rest! I'll sit down on the track.
[*Sits.*]
Oh, it's fine to be free, with each reed, grass and tree,
As a jolly companion to roister with me—
With no smiles to suppress, and no yawning to smother
As so often occurs with my Royal Queen Mother.
[FIELD MOUSE *peeps out of hedge,* PRINCE *sees her.*]
Mark! Field Mouse!
[*Throws a fir cone and misses.*]
High right!
[FIELD MOUSE *flies.*]
Never mind! Made it wriggle! . . .
And then to escape from the titter and giggle,
The blushing and gushing and winking and shynesses
Of those very Serene and Transparent young Highnesses,
My cousins, Erminda, Belinda and Pearl!
Why, it's grand to look round without seeing a girl!
[FIELD MOUSE *reappears.*]

MOUSE [*aside to* OWL].

'Tis the Prince. He must wake her. I'll squeak till he follows me!

It's worth *any* risk. I don't care if he swallows me!

PRINCE.

I'll just settle down here and I'll build me a house
Made of branches and leaves [MOUSE *squeaks*]. Stop! I *must* catch that mouse!

[MOUSE *disappears into the hedge.* PRINCE *draws sword and hacks at the bushes which suddenly part and reveal . . . the* SLEEPING BEAUTY *on her couch, the old* NURSE, *the* CAT, *the* CANARY, *etc.*]

PRINCE.

Odds Bodkins! Where am I? What *do* I behold?
A vision of beauty, with tresses of gold,
Not a bit like Erminda, Belinda, or Pearl!
I believe . . . No, it *can't* . . . Yes, it *must* . . . be . . . a girl!
[*Goes forward a little and looks at her seriously.*]
Well, she *is* simply jolly! I'd like to go nearer . . .
And perhaps even *touch* her . . . but somehow, I fear her!
She's so *good!* . . . Are they always like that when asleep?
Shall I fly for my life . . . or go forward and "peep"?

MOUSE.

Ask the Owl.

OWL. As if any one cared what *I* say!
My advice is "clear out"! but I know that you'll stay.

PRINCE.

Yes, I will! [*Advancing a little.*] What a hand! Why, I can't understand
How prettier fingers could ever be planned!
She has corals for lips and her cheek is a rose
And . . . Ye Gods and small Fishes! . . . just *look* at her Nose!
It's so pink and so white and so bachelor's buttony
That I cannot resist it! It fills me with gluttony!

The cheeky tip-tilted young lump of delight!
The rogue! . . . I'll just teach it! . . . Here goes for a bite!
[*Bends down and rises again laughing.*]
But perhaps that might *wake* her, it's safer to *kiss!*
[*Does so. The lady wakes, clock strikes,* NURSE *stands up,* CAT *mews, etc.*]
Good Heavens!

NURSE.
It's time for your *chocolate,* Miss!

SLEEPING BEAUTY [*to* PRINCE].
Who are *you?*

NURSE.
And it's time to get . . . [*Sees* PRINCE] Well, I declare . . . !

SLEEPING BEAUTY [*repeating*].
Who are *you?* And what chance brought you here?

PRINCE. Lady Fair.
A Knight Errant by trade, and Prince Charming by name,
In the search of adventure I happily came,
In the hope that good fortune would throw in my way
A Princess to save or a Dragon to slay,
Till I found in the wild, far from pasture and tillage
You asleep!

NURSE. How he boasts of a walk through the village!

PRINCE.
What village?

NURSE. *The* village.

PRINCE. There's *none.*

MOUSE. It appears
That there's not been a village for years and for years.
Ask the Owl!

OWL. What the Mouse says is perfectly true!
All the houses have crumbled and fallen, while *you,*
Kept suspended in time, like a Mammoth in ice,

Have not disintegrated! . . . and even look *nice.*
When this amorous Princeling at kissing did venture, he
Disturbed a sound sleep that had lasted a *century!*
I would add that a useful deduction from this is
"Let your beak be securely protected from kisses."

PRINCE.

Goodness gracious!

NURSE. Oh, Lor'!

SLEEPING BEAUTY. For a century past
For a hundred long years I have slept and at last,
I awake to the light and the life and the gleam
Of this merry old world . . . like the flower in my dream!

PRINCE.

Like the flower? You must tell me!

SLEEPING BEAUTY. Ah, times without number,
As I wandered alone in the Garden of Slumber,
Came the dream . . . that a little flower under the ground
In the chill of the clay and in silence profound
Pushed up, from its roots, through the blackness of night,
A little soft tendril in search of the light;
But it met on its way, here a clod, there a stone,
And I wept in the Garden of Slumber, alone,
As I watched it, still striving in darkness and pain,
And could see that its hopes and its efforts were vain,
Till at last, the Sun burst through the silence and gloom,
Kissed the tendril, and crowned it with springtime and bloom.

PRINCE [*taking her hands*].

I've invented a game! Shall we play it?

MOUSE. What fun!

SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Yes, of course!

PRINCE.

Be the tendril and I'll be the sun!
Be the Queen of the morning and I'll be the King,
And the Owl shall unite us with book and with ring!

SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Well, I'm sure! What a funny proposal to make!
And it all is so *sudden*. I'm hardly *awake!*
[*Thinks for a moment.*]
I'm a hundred and twelve and you're only fifteen.
You're a great deal too young!

NURSE. Yes, that's easily seen.

PRINCE.

Time is only a word. Nothing matters but Life
And we're equal in that, so you *must* be my wife.
Here's the ring!
[*Puts a ring on her finger.*]

OWL.

This sweet union let nothing dissever.

PRINCE [*to* SLEEPING BEAUTY].

I take you at once and I keep you for ever!

OWL [*to* SLEEPING BEAUTY].

Will you marry this Prince, honor, love and obey?

SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Yes, I'll *honor and love* him as long as I may.
[*To the* PRINCE]
Are we *married?*

PRINCE.

For ever, my Queen and Delight.

SLEEPING BEAUTY [*to the* OWL].

Are we married?

OWL. Why, yes, I suppose it's all right!

SLEEPING BEAUTY [*to the* MOUSE].

What think you?

MOUSE. I don't *think!* But *my feeling* is this:
You were married the moment he gave you a kiss.

[CURTAIN]

THANKSGIVING

FESTIVAL OF THE HARVEST MOON *

By

SUE ANN WILSON

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PEOPLE OF THE FESTIVAL

PRINCIPALS

HARVEST MOON
THREE SAGES
GROUCH
TICKER
DR. PSYCHE
DOLLAR
H. C. L.
OLD WOMAN IN SHOE, OR COMMUNITY CHEST
CHIEFTAIN
THE HIGH PRIEST
MIRIAM
LEADER OF GREEKS
LEADER OF PILGRIMS
REAPER
COCK

GROUPS

MOONBEAMS
STARDUST GIRLS
HARVESTERS

PRIMITIVES
HEBREWS
GREEKS
PILGRIMS
} *Honored Guests*

BLUES
NONSENSE (JACK-O'-LANTERN)
KULL-KOLD-KANNING-KLAN
PAGES
FOREIGN GROUPS
MONEY DRIVES

CHILDREN
- *Y.W.C.A.*
- *Y.M.C.A.*
- *Salvation Army*
- *Red Cross*
- *K. of C.*
- *Any Others*

POLITICAL PARTY
PLATFORM PLANKS

FESTIVAL OF THE HARVEST MOON

The Festival of the Harvest Moon should be given as a Thanksgiving celebration by all the community rather than as a performance by a part of the community. Therefore, it is advisable to hold the festival in a large hall, armory, or gymnasium instead of in any kind of a theater, in order that a large center floor space may be accessible to all. As no stage setting proper is used, the whole lobby or entrance should be decorated with autumn foliage. On entering the lobby, those bidden to attend should be met by a group of girls in costume (the Stardust Girls), selling almanacs (programs) and harvest moons (yellow balloons). The Stardust Girls, full of "quips and pranks," should be responsible for starting every one into the harvest field in festival mood, and if possible these revelers should be ushered in and seated according to school, church, club, and so forth, and, during the assembling, spend the time in rival songs and cheers.

A large rectangular or square hall or field will lend itself best to the Harvest Festival. If such a place is used, the audience should be seated around the four sides in amphitheater fashion. The first rows of these seats should be reserved for the costumed participants, the number of seats reserved depending upon the number of people who take part. Have the entrances preferably at the corners of the hall or field. This will add a great deal to the ease of assembling and will facilitate the entrances of the costumed groups. If possible, a round dais, built in proportion to the size of the hall, should be erected in the center, with several steps leading up to it on all sides.

If it is found that the voices of the participants are not heard easily from the center floor space, the dais may be placed at one end of the hall. The costumed groups with the most appropriate color scheme should be chosen to sit in the first rows of that side of the amphitheater where the dais is placed.

THE ALMANAC

NOTE: The Almanac is in reality the program for the Festival, and it is suggested that it be printed exactly as follows.

I. MOON RISES

The Sages set off the astrological alarm clock for the Harvest Moon. (*Take notice*—All are urged to wake up and have a good time.)

II. NEW MOON

GATHERING OF HARVESTERS

First Crop—Moonbeams shed their festive light over the scene.

Second Crop—The Harvesters of Earth, Field and Air arrive for the frolic.

Third Crop—Time-honored Celebrants bring their thank-offerings.

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home:
All is safely gathered in,
Ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide
For our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come,
Raise the song of harvest home.

All the world is God's own field,
Fruit unto his praise to yield;
Wheat and tares together sown,
Unto joy or sorrow grown:
First the blade, and then the ear,
Then the full corn shall appear;
Grant, O harvest Lord, that we
Wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come,
And shall take his harvest home;
From his field shall in that day
All offenses purge away;
Give his angels charge at last
In the fire the tares to cast,
But the fruitful ears to store
In his garner evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come
To thy final harvest-home;
Gather Thou thy people in,
Free from sorrow, free from sin,
There, forever purified,
In thy presence to abide:
Come, with all thine angels, come,
Raise the glorious harvest-home.

III. SECOND QUARTER

OVERFLOW OF MOON ELIXIR

All are invited to toast the Harvest Moon.

Hail, hail, we're here, all here,
Let us cheer the Harvest Moon,
Let us cheer the Harvest Moon.
Hail, hail, we're here, all here,
Let us cheer the Harvest Moon.

First Lunie—Old Man Grouch is discovered among those present and tries to break up the party.

Second Lunie—A sure tip discloses the presence of other Grouches and the famous Spirito Mentaless Analyst is sent for.

Third Lunie—Examination and treatment of the afflicted.

Celebrate and Sing

Oh, the grouches ain't what they used to be,
Ain't what they used to be,
Ain't what they used to be!
Oh, the grouches ain't what they used to be,
Before they met Dr. Psyche,
Before they met Dr. Psyche,
Before they met Dr. Psyche!
Oh, the grouches ain't what they used to be,
Before they met Dr. Psyche!

Fourth Lunie—Entrance and treatment of the Blues.

Fifth Lunie—Frenzied finance.

Sixth Lunie—Election campaign.

IV. FULL MOON

THE SPREADING OF THE FEAST

First Thank-offering—The Primitives, with nature's freedom, bring their thank-offering of Health.

Second Thank-offering—Truth is offered by the Hebrews.

Third Thank-offering—The joy and rhythm of true art, the thank-offering of Beauty, is given to all by the Greeks.

Fourth Thank-offering—With the vision and courage of the Crusaders the great thank-offering of Freedom of Worship is presented by the Pilgrims.

Fifth Thank-offering—The Harvesters of Earth, Field, and Air bring the comforts of home and food.

V. LAST QUARTER

THE HARVEST REVEL

This is *your* chance to become one of the revelers.

VI. MOON SETS

COCKCROW

Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days;
Bounteous source of every joy,
Let thy praise our tongues employ;
All to Thee, our God, we owe,
Source whence all our blessings flow. Amen.

All the plenty summer pours;
Autumn's rich o'er-flowing stores;
Flocks that whiten all the plain;
Yellow sheaves of ripened grain;
Lord, for these our souls shall raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise.

Peace, prosperity, and health,
Private bliss, and public wealth,
Knowledge with its gladdening streams,
Pure religion's holier beams:
Lord, for these our souls shall raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise.

As thy prospering hand hath blest,
May we give Thee of our best;
And by deeds of kindly love
For thy mercies grateful prove;
Singing thus through all our days,
Praise to God, immortal praise.

MOON RISES

At the appointed time, the orchestra strikes up the overture and three figures, the Sages, *in fantastic make-up and astrologers' costumes, enter, one carrying a large telescope, another a stand and enormous compass, and the third a map of the heavens. One carries, or has suspended on a ribbon around his neck, a very large alarm clock. With great solemnity they stop near their entrance and proceed to spread out the map and set up the telescope. Then with pantomime burlesque they study the map and search the horizon of the amphitheater. At first their efforts are unsuccessful and they confer and shake their heads. As the music ceases, one of them who has been again exploring by telescope, suddenly begins to dance up and down and shouts out:*

I Sage. There's the lazy fellow. [*Immediately a spotlight reveals a rounded, huddled figure, draped in a blue-black cape and surrounded by other figures in the same draping, so that they give the effect of a bank of dark clouds. A bright, golden slice, as of a rising moon, is visible around the center figure. If it has been possible for these characters to enter early enough, this cloudbank effect could be arranged on the center dais. If this is not possible, it should be done at one side and near one of the entrances, or on the stage. The* Sages, *with great dignity and authority, advance toward the group and begin to punch and poke at the one bit of revealed gold.*]

I Sage. Arise, slothful one!

II Sage. Don't you know it's your birthday?

III Sage. You're behind schedule, and upsetting all our scientific theories. [*Sets off large alarm clock. Slowly the draped figure emerges from the enveloping folds and discloses itself as the* Harvest Moon, *making sleepy, grumbling responses.*]

MOON [*clapping hands over ears*]. Oh, what an earthly racket! [*Observes the* SAGES *for the first time, and makes a mock obeisance.*] All-wise Sages! I might have known it. [*Crossly.*] Can't you leave a fellow alone? I never get time to sleep because you're always pestering me with your telescope and scientific deductions and awful inventions. [*He makes a threatening motion at the alarm clock.*] Go away! [*He tries to go back to his slumber after he waves them aside.*]

I SAGE. Take heed, slacker! You can't do that! [*He leans down to rouse* MOON *again and discovers a crystal urn marked "Moon Elixir," hidden under the cloak.*] So that's it. We might have known. [*Poking the* MOON.] Say, can't we have some of that?

MOON [*rousing himself, sleepily*]. Sure! I'll be glad to share my elixir with you—but you wiseacres are always taking the joy out of life. You don't half appreciate me, and I am carrying on a scientific experiment for you all the time. Don't stand there shaking your heads. I tell you I am.

II SAGE. All right, all right, only stop arguing. It's your birthday, and if you don't hurry you're going to be late for your own party.

MOON [*excitedly*]. My birthday! Signs of the zodiac! Why didn't you tell me that before?

SAGES [*in chorus*]. We did!

MOON. No, you didn't! No, you didn't! [*Rising animatedly.*] Is my face on straight? That's the trouble with you, you always have to proceed according to theory. No creative instinct; no temperament! Bah! But where are the guests?

I SAGE [*indicating the assembled audience*]. Here are a lot of them, and the others are coming down the high roads and by-paths to the Harvest Field.

MOON [*looking up and apparently seeing the audience for the first time, speaks genially*]. Welcome, friends; 'tis a good evening for you. I'd have greeted you with my

shining countenance long before this if these wise old Sages didn't tie me down to an orbit and make me spend my last quarter before they let me out. [*Going among the cloudbanks, as the* SAGES *shake their heads goodnaturedly.*] Hey, you Moonbeams! Shake your rays out of your cloudy bedclothes and come celebrate my birthday. It's time you were shining down every hedgerow and over every harvest field. Up and greet the guests!

NEW MOON

GATHERING OF THE HARVESTERS

FIRST CROP

The orchestra begins playing, and as it plays, flashes of light appear amidst the clouds and the MOONBEAMS *begin to emerge. They come tumbling out with handsprings and leapfrog and scatter over the field to the different entrances. If possible, a dance could be introduced here.*

SECOND CROP

The orchestra now strikes up a spirited march and the STARDUST GIRLS *burst from one of the entrances, led by four* MOONBEAMS *and followed by the* HARVESTERS. *The groups are dressed to represent reapers of fruit and grain, and seekers of minerals and game. They can be dressed in costumes of autumn shades—wines and plums, gray-yellow, vermilion, gray-green and orange-brown—or in white, and carry branches of autumn leaves, sheaves of grain, fruit, bows and arrows, and so on. Led by the* MOONBEAMS *and directed by one of the* SAGES *they execute a spirited grand march, going at the end of the march to seats which have been reserved for them in the amphitheater. The* STARDUST GIRLS *continue their pranks through all the marching*

and go to points of vantage at the end of the march. In short, the STARDUST GIRLS *keep the fun moving through the whole festival.*

When the HARVESTERS *are in place, one of the* SAGES *calls out to them.*

SAGE. Let's toast the Harvest Moon. All together! [*All, audience and costumed groups, respond by singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."*]

MOON. Thanks, good friends. Welcome to my party. I hope you all brought me a present. [*Looking around.*] But I don't see a lot of my friends who have always celebrated with me since I first began having birthdays—those who roamed this earth before men built houses and lived in cities; and later, those to whom God's covenant was intrusted; our beauty-loving friends of ages past; and those fearless souls who celebrated the first harvest in this good old country of ours. Where are all of these old friends? [*Searches the hall with a puzzled expression.*]

MOONBEAMS [*interrupting with a shout*]. Here they come. [*The orchestra begins playing, "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come," and from the four entrances four groups enter in procession, singing. These groups represent the* PRIMITIVES (*ruby-red*), *the* HEBREWS (*deep orange*), GREEKS (*blue-green*), *and the* PILGRIMS (*violet*). *These groups are costumed authentically, in mass coloring, complementary to each other and to the groups of* HARVESTERS. *Each group marches in characteristic procession. Led by the* MOONBEAMS *they march to the sections reserved for them and are seated as the hymn ends.*

If a large hall has been used, with people seated on all four sides, these costumed groups should be placed on the floor level at the four different sides in some characteristic grouping, easily held through the performance. The people can change places or be seated as the fun progresses. These groups should be placed so that their color is complementary to the group of HARVESTERS, *which is seated*

directly behind each costumed group. If there is a stage in the festival hall, this can be utilized for these costumed groups, and they should be massed to form an effective picture.]

SECOND QUARTER

OVERFLOW OF MOON ELIXIR

FIRST LUNIE

As soon as the last groups have reached their places, the STARDUST GIRLS *start singing, "All Hail, We're Here, All Here."*

All hail! We're here, all here!
Let us cheer the Harvest Moon,
Let us cheer the Harvest Moon.
All hail! We're here, all here!
Let us cheer the Harvest Moon.

MOON. Well, we all seem to have arrived. With all this lunar display [*indicating the* MOONBEAMS *and* STARDUST GIRLS] and overflow of moon elixir, some of us are sure to get "lunie." Let's start the party. When do we eat? [*All respond with a shout of approval. A commotion arises near one of the entrances, in which some of the* MOONBEAMS *seem most prominent.*]

MOON. What's all this racket? Moonbeams, can't I ever take you out in public without your disgracing yourselves? [*Hopelessly.*] "Lunie!" I knew it. [*The commotion continues, and as the group approaches the dais the other* MOONBEAMS *hasten to join it. One of the* SAGES *goes to investigate, and calls out that there is an intruder. There now becomes visible a ragged, dilapidated individual of disagreeable and hangdog mien.*]

FIRST SAGE. He says he is Old Man Grouch, and he thinks you're too old to have a birthday.

MOON. Now isn't that just like a grouch? I bet he's

lost track of his. Bring him here and let's have a look at him. [GROUCH *is brought forward, sullenly shaking off the detaining hands as he comes.*]

MOON. What do you mean by such slandering remarks?

GROUCH [*gruffly*]. You make me sick, acting up like some young thing, with birthday parties and all. Why, you're older than the hills.

MOON [*to the guests*]. Did you hear that? Now I appeal to you. Am I not just as young as I look? [*The guests respond with shouts of "Yes, yes!"*] I told you so. What have you got to say to that?

GROUCH. Oh, you're too light-headed to know anything. Anyhow, I'm not the only grouch here.

MOON. Not the only grouch here! You don't mean to say there's any one else like you in the world?

GROUCH [*pointing to a queer-looking individual, the* TICKER, *who is seated at one side*]. Ask that. [GROUCH *seats himself on the steps of the dais and glares at everything and every one around him.*]

MOON [*to* TICKER]. Who are you?

TICKER. I'm the fellow who put the tip in tipping. I'm the Ticker.

MOON. Now who would have thought such an innocent looking person would be the cause of all the gambling in the world. Bring him here, and let's find out the worst.

SECOND LUNIE

The TICKER *is led forward by several* MOONBEAMS, *and the* SAGES, *with large magnifying glasses, begin to examine a long, white tape, which drags after him, like the tape of a ticker machine. As they do so, they shake their heads and groan.*

MOON. For goodness' sake, reach some hypothesis. We can't go on with a party until we eliminate all grouches. What do you see? [*The* FIRST SAGE *reads off names of*

prominent people who are known to have certain pet hobbies and a sense of humor that will let them enter into the spirit of fun which follows.]

MOON [*repeating the names*]. This is awful. Bring them here. Bring them here. [*The* MOONBEAMS *now usher down from the audience the people whose names have been read, amid cheers from the* STARDUST GIRLS *and the others, who chime in with, "Oh, here comes .....! Say, doesn't he look sweet?" or "Mr. ....., Mr. ....., we've been thinking," etc.*]

MOON. Ticker, do you mean to give us the tip that these well known guests have grouches? It seems impossible. [*The* TICKER *nods "yes."*] What are we going to do? [*Desperately.*] They can't stay here with a grouch. [*One of the* SAGES *whispers into the* MOON'S *ear.*] Just the thing. We'll send a mental telegram for Dr. Psyche, and have her prescribe. All please be very quiet and project the thought. [*If possible, the assembled people are made to keep absolutely still. As soon as the hush is general, there is a tremendous clatter and clang, and a humorous-looking ambulance, with queer signs on the sides, enters. To show that the ambulance is an object of the "imagination," a framework, on wheels, but having no side pieces, may be used. The doctor could run inside of this square framework. The ambulance races around the floor, finally coming to a stop before the* MOON, *and* DR. PSYCHE *descends to the floor.*]

DR. PSYCHE. I received your telepathic message. [*Bowing.*] Here I am at your service. [*Pointing to the imaginary wagon.*] This is my up-to-date mental ambulance. [*Holding up an imaginary doctor's bag.*] Here are my medicines which will cure any ill because you think they will. Now to work! Where are my victims?

THIRD LUNIE

The MOON *points solemnly to the* GROUCHES, *and the doctor proceeds to examine the offenders by playing the game*

"Simon Says," "Beast, Bird or Fish," or "Boots Without Shoes." If the doctor is not able to conduct this game, she can delegate it to the SAGE *who has charge of the other recreational features in the festival. When the game is concluded the* DOCTOR *speaks.*

DR. PSYCHE. Just as I feared. Suppressed desires, grouch complexes. [*Groans from all around. She now reads a list, calling out each name and after it the grouch which the person is supposed to be harboring. These grouches may be their pet hobbies or pet aversions. This fun should all be localized. When she has finished the list, she continues.*] I prescribe that one of these learned Sages sublimate these grouches, and they will disappear. In other words, elevate their thoughts—sublime—spirits—ghosts—I have it! A dram of "I See a Ghost" taken with a draft of good humor and administered by a worthy Sage. [*The* SAGE *in charge of recreation now takes charge of the group and puts them through a game of "I See a Ghost," at the end of which these people are allowed to return to their seats, amid cheers and songs from the other guests and such nonsense songs as "Oh, the Grouches Ain't What They Used to Be."*

The orchestra starts playing weird and melancholy music, and from several entrances fantastic blue-black figures make their appearance, with queer antics. The light begins to dim and the MOON *calls out.*]

MOON. Gracious, are we never going to have any fun? What's all the gloom? [*The* MOONBEAMS *begin to whimper, and point to the approaching figures, while they call out in awed whispers.*]

MOONBEAMS. The Blues!!!

MOON. The Blues? Oh, I say! We're here for a good time. We don't want any spoil sports. [*Severely, to the* MOONBEAMS.] Stop your whimpering, and bring those intruders here. Doctor, this is another case for you. [*The* DOCTOR *proceeds to examine them. She punches them,*

makes them stick out their tongues, stand on their heads, and do other burlesque examination tests. At last she solemnly advances to the MOON *and speaks in a stage whisper.*]

DR. PSYCHE. Livers!!!

MOON. Can't you do anything for them?

DR. PSYCHE [*pompously*]. Of course! Fresh air, exercise, nonsense, LOTS OF NONSENSE. Here you, Ticker, take this prescription and see that it is filled immediately. [*She pretends to write on the ticker tape. As she does, large* JACK-O'-LANTERNS *come bobbing in from one of the entrances, singing, "We're Here Because We're Here," and so on. Immediately the* MOONBEAMS *and* STARDUST GIRLS *begin to shout*]: Nonsense! Nonsense! Hail our Nonsense Friends! [*As the* JACK-O'-LANTERNS *advance, the* BLUES *retreat and huddle in a group.*]

DR. PSYCHE [*halting the* JACK-O'-LANTERNS]. Nonsense, you're the prescribed tonic for these anemic-souled, liverish Blues. You're nice, big round pills of fun. Make them swallow you. [*The* JACK-O'-LANTERNS *now advance on the crouched figures and pull them up. They form into a circle and make the* BLUES *play "Carrouselle" under the direction of one of the* SAGES. *At the end they break up with a shout.*]

DR. PSYCHE. Great! Now bundle them into the ambulance, and I'll take them off to the hospital to finish up the job. [*The* BLUES *are placed in the imaginary ambulance and the* JACK-O'-LANTERNS *go to points of vantage around the festival hall. The ambulance is about to start off when one of the* SAGES *discovers* OLD MAN GROUCH *and stops the ambulance, shouting.*]

SAGE. Desist! Take this fellow and see what you can cut out to make him human. [*The* GROUCH *is hustled into the ambulance, which now goes clanging off, while those who remain give three lusty cheers for* DR. PSYCHE.]

A person dressed like a dollar, pursued by another, the H. C. L., in fantastic costume, now rushes on, intent on a game of tag. Following them, on a float, comes a large

shoe (or community chest), worn and dilapidated, from which numerous ragged children protrude. A forlorn old woman, the Old Woman in a Shoe, *is urging on some exhausted girls, the* Money Drivers, *who are pulling the float and who collapse as soon as they enter. The* Old Woman *gets down and looks helplessly at them and then appeals to the* Moon. *The ragged children in the shoe represent the Association and other organizations who conduct drives for money for which a community chest has been established.*]

Old Woman in Shoe. Did you see that bad boy? [*Hopelessly.*] He's always running away from me now. [*The* Dollar *has hidden and the H. C. L., searching for him, is the only one in evidence.*]

I Sage [*grabbing* H. C. L.]. You mean this one?

Old Woman [*indignantly*]. H. C. L.!!! I should say not! He's the cause of all the trouble. He's always fighting with Dollar and chasing him around these days, and I can't get Dollar to do anything for me any more. He used to be such a good boy and run errands. I've had Drives trying to help me catch up with him, but they're all worn out and I don't know what I'm going to do about the shoe and all my children.

Moon. You have quite a family.

Old Woman. Yes, but I'm afraid I shall have to farm most of them out, or give them to an institution, or let somebody adopt them, because I simply can't feed and clothe them any more. [*Shaking fist at* H. C. L.] This is all your doings, you bad, good-for-nothing—

Moon. Sages, here's a chance for you to work out a new theory. How are we going to mend the shoe and keep all her children together?

I Sage [*holding* H. C. L. *and shaking him*]. First let's get rid of this trouble-maker.

Moon. Good! All in favor of canning H. C. L. signify by shouting "Aye." [*The audience responds with a tre-*

mendous shout.] What canning company shall we employ?

I SAGE. Kull!

II SAGE. Kold!

III SAGE. Kanning!

ALL. Klan!

MOON. Splendid! Page the Kull-Kold-Kanning-Klan. [*Groups take up the shout; i.e.,* MOONBEAMS, *"Kull"; STARDUST GIRLS, "Kold"; NONSENSE, "Kanning"; ALL, "Klan." Immediately the* KULL-KOLD-KANNING-KLAN, *costumed in a burlesque of the Ku Klux Klan costume, come prancing in on wooden hobbyhorses and solemnly surround* H. C. L., *who now loses his cock-sure attitude and becomes terrified. Without a word, a halter is placed around the neck of* H. C. L. *The orchestra strikes up the Funeral March from "Saul," or "John Brown's Body," and the* MOONBEAMS, SAGES, *and so on, form a mock funeral procession, as* H. C. L. *is marched off. Some of the girls in the procession can make believe that they are playing instruments of a band.*

SIXTH LUNIE

MOON. Well, we've gotten rid of him! What can we really do to help the Old Woman? [*Testily.*] This trouble is all the fault of the administration. It always is. [*Pensively.*] If only we had a new political party! [*The* TICKER *begins to get active again, and makes itself noticed.*] Oh, it's your old friend Ticker right on the job with a tip, I bet! Hey, one of you Sages, please translate. [*The* SAGES *advance, and as soon as they examine the* TICKER'S *tape they show surprise and excitement.*]

MOON. For goodness' sake, don't keep us in suspense.

FIRST SAGE [*getting excited*]. A new party!

MOON. A new party! It's getting exciting.

SECOND SAGE. Reforms and everything!

MOON. But what is the party?

FIRST SAGE. Here it comes with its platform. [*A torch-light procession, with signs, now enters. Marching with them in lock-step is a procession of the* PLANKS *of the platform. The signs can be such as "The Political Party for Poor Profiteering People," and so on; the* PLANKS, *"Free Gasoline," "Eliminating the Servant Problem," and so on.*

When the procession has entered, and comes to a halt, the PLANKS *arrange themselves together so that they can be read. One of the people in the procession can make a "soap box" speech for the new party, especially recommending a commission to investigate everything that needs reform, amid cheers and burlesque songs. If possible, this person should be some one connected with politics. After the speech is finished, the procession of the* PLANKS *marches out and the* OLD WOMAN *and her shoe of children follow joyfully after. The speech and planks should be worked out with local color.*]

MOON. Things are looking up. We've eliminated the Grouches, we're fixing up the Blues, and we've got a new political party that's going to solve all our troubles. Oh, I say! Can't we have that birthday party of mine, candles 'n' everything?

SAGE. All your friends have brought thank-offerings for you.

MOON. Hurrah! And here comes the table. [*The orchestra plays a processional or the* MOONBEAMS, SAGES *and others start singing, as four pages, bearing a long table, enter with great dignity. This they place in the center of the floor and drape with a long, brilliant cover that falls from each end to the floor. If a central dais has been used, the table should be placed on it. The* PAGES *go to the four corners of the table and stand immovable, with folded arms during the ceremonies that follow.*

FULL MOON

SPREADING OF THE FEAST

MOON. Friends old and new, we've gathered here to celebrate again the harvest-tide and to give thanks for the good things of the earth which now repay long days of patient labor. For this, our celebration, rare gifts are brought as thank-offerings. Gifts from those oldest friends of ours, the Primitives, who first paid tribute to this festal day. Gifts from the Hebrews, who at God's command have cherished always this high feast. Gifts from the peerless tribes of Greece, and a mighty gift from our Pilgrim Fathers, whose early planting is growing an ever greater harvest for those of us in this wide land where first they set their feet. And lastly, gracious gifts from our own bright harvesters, who reap where they have sown. Come! Let the feast be spread!

FIRST THANK-OFFERING

A CHIEFTAIN *rises from the* PRIMITIVE *group and speaks.*

CHIEFTAIN. Long ere the narrow boundaries which now bind man's life were forged, we roamed the hill and plain, and step by step we learned to chain the elements to do our bidding. Sturdy of limb and fleet of foot, we wrested from the out-of-doors, and brought to each new harvest-time a thank-offering, not to be bought with glittering beads or shining gold. Now once more we return and bring, in thankfulness, our gift of Health. [*As he finishes, the group arises with a shout and with a swift run sweep across the floor and around the table, forming a circle. They stop suddenly and face inward, and opposite the sides and ends of the table four* CHIEFTAINS *step out with shields and spears uplifted. With martial tread they advance to the table and place their shields and spears at either side, so*

that they form a decoration. They then return to the circle and either dance or, under the direction of one of the SAGES, *play an ancient game of hunting. At the end they run back to their places.*]

SECOND THANK-OFFERING

As soon as the PRIMITIVES *have returned to their places, the* HIGH PRIEST *of the* HEBREWS *stands out, with candle bearers on either side, and speaks.*

THE HIGH PRIEST. "When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days . . . and ye shall take unto you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook, and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." Thus spake the Lord on Sinai's mount, and gave unto our keeping, Truth. Safely guarded through centuries of tradition, we bring this thank-offering to the feast. [*The* HEBREWS *now form in joyous procession, and singing an old antiphonal chant (Exodus XV) proceed toward the table. The procession consists of the* HIGH PRIEST, *with candle bearers, carrying a brass seven-branch candlestick, on either side of him. Following are the people, carrying branches of fruit and palm trees and a group of dancing girls with cymbals, headed by the prophetess* MIRIAM. *The* HIGH PRIEST *mounts the steps of the dais with the candle bearers, who, at a signal, place a candlestick at either end of the table. The people strew their branches over the floor around the table, while some with palms go to the table and place them on the board. The people now seat themselves on the steps of the center dais, as the dancing maidens form a tableau background for* MIRIAM, *who gives a dance of thanksgiving. When she finishes, she returns to her original place in the amphitheater, while the others follow the* HIGH PRIEST *in informal procession as he leads them back.*]

THIRD THANK-OFFERING

The leader among the GREEK *group rises and speaks.*

GREEK LEADER. In all that life offered us we strove to mold the rhythm of the universe into the expression of true art. Joyfully we lived in that great faith, which now we bring to you in offering—our faith in Beauty. [*The orchestra starts playing as the group advances, some of them carrying beautiful baskets and urns, others having scarfs, others free handed. At each corner of the room the girls dance, sometimes in pure rhythm, sometimes in pantomime of Greek athletics and games, while those with urns form a plastic background. After they have danced four times, they advance to the table and the dancers form a tableau while the girls carrying vases go to the table. One large urn is placed in the center, smaller ones on either side, and wine and water bottles on the floor. At the end, the girls run lightly back to their places and the music ceases.*

The PILGRIMS *stand as the music for the Greek group ceases, and the leader speaks.*]

PILGRIM LEADER. Great was the courage that sustained us through trials and perils unforeseen, but greater still the vision that led us on. 'Twas then, in glad thanksgiving, that we gave to all the world, and give it still to-day, "freedom to worship God." [*Immediately the* PILGRIMS *begin to sing Schubert's "The Lord Is My Shepherd." As they sing, two Pilgrim children, a boy and a girl, advance to the table, carrying lighted tapers representing the light of that "freedom to worship God" for which the Pilgrims blazed the way to the New World. When the children reach the table, there enter from the four corners of the room—only two corners may be used if more convenient—groups of people representing all nationalities, each dressed in its own national costume. These march slowly forward, with uplifted arms, going directly toward the table. They bring the "incense of their worship," and each in reality*

carries incense, which is placed in the central urn as they pass. The children have placed their lighted tapers in the urn, and even as the Pilgrims were the first to find freedom of worship, signified by the lighted tapers, so each nationality, bringing its own religion, finds the freedom of expression that it seeks, and their incense, ignited by the taper light, rises from the urn in a blue cloud. The children now lead these newcomers back to the PILGRIMS, *who greet them, and the diverse nationalities merge into one as the anthem ceases. A* REAPER *now rises and says.*]

REAPER. Because of these offerings through the ages, we, the toilers of to-day, come from fields and forests and earth's deep treasure houses to bring our harvest home. [*At the end of this speech the* HARVESTERS *come tumbling down from their seats to the floor, singing a harvest song. Some bring branches and baskets of fruit, game, stalks of grain, corn, etc. They go to the table and place their offerings in the baskets and other receptacles left by the Greeks, until the table is overflowing with good things. Then they join the others, who make a double circle under the direction of the* MOONBEAMS. *The* SAGE *of recreation now takes command and teaches the group "Jolly Is the Miller," and all the* HARVESTERS *dance and sing.*]

LAST QUARTER

THE HARVEST REVEL

MOON.

We've disposed of the Grouches and banished the Blues,
Spread a feast most delighted from which you may choose,
From hearts that are thankful we've sung our glad praise
For the blessings that Heaven bestowed through our days.

In true friendship we've gathered for this celebration,
So let happiness reign as our own inspiration.
For our guide summon Nonsense, to lead us in fun,
And all join in the revel till rise of the sun.

[*The* JACK-O'-LANTERNS *now lead the* HARVESTERS, MOONBEAMS, STARDUST GIRLS *and the* SAGES, *and all join in a revel, of which the* SAGE *of recreation takes charge. A harvest dance could be taught here. At the same time, the* HARVESTERS *or* STARDUST GIRLS *distribute serpentines and confetti among the people seated nearest to the performers, who throw these over the heads of the dancing figures.*]

MOON SETS

COCKCROW

Suddenly, at the top of the amphitheater, a large grotesque rooster appears and crows loud and lustily, and the dancers are brought to a sudden stop.

MOON [*looking up and shaking his fist at the bird*]. I don't want to go to bed. You're worse than the curfew. [*Again the cock crows, and a rosy light begins to show behind him. Led by the* STARDUST GIRLS, *the* HARVESTERS *start singing, "We Won't Be Home Until Morning," and skip out through all entrances. As they go out the* MOON *speaks.*]

MOON. Well, I won't get home until morning, that's sure! Haven't we had a good time? Will you all come to my party next year? [*The guests respond with cries of "Yes, yes."*] I've got to find a nice soft cloud and a new brew of moon elixir. Who'll go with me? As long as we have to go, let's go merrily and sing "Merrily We Roll Along." [*A harvest song may be used instead of "Merrily We Roll Along."*]

The onlookers and honored guests start singing, as the MOON, *followed by the four costumed groups, whom the* MOONBEAMS *marshal, marches out, and the festival is over.*]

NOTE: this Festival may be much abridged, as well as adapted to local needs.

PRODUCING SUGGESTIONS

COSTUMES

HARVEST MOON: Underslip (bodice and bloomers together) made of yellow silkaline; short, tight-fitting Empire waist of silver metal. Skirt made of three layers of tarlatan, pleated in deep side-pleats and cut in three flounces, the longest about four inches below the knee; top section painted gold, middle section silver, and the third gold. (Use radiator gilt and silver.) A girdle, of three rows of Christmas tree tinsel sewed on a strip of tarlatan, forms a belt where the skirt joins the waist. Another band made in the same way confines the pleats around the hips, so that the skirt is tight from the waist to the hips and begins to flare below the second girdle. A triangle ornamentation is suspended from the lower girdle in front. A straight piece of chiffon is fastened at the shoulders and caught to the wrists with elastic bands. A band of tinsel, with a tinsel ornamentation in front, confines the hair, and a large headdress, about three feet in diameter, made of tarlatan to represent a full moon, is wired along the edges and from the center outward with whalebone, and painted in alternating strips of gold and silver. From the lower edge—cut concave—Christmas tree "icicles" are suspended. This moon effect is fastened to the back of the head. Gold stockings and slippers.

SAGES: A knee-length skirt of white oilcloth, with the lower edge cut in points. Black oilcloth tunic with sleeves; edge of tunic and sleeves cut in points. Large flare of

white oilcloth, also cut in points, inside black oilcloth sleeves. Circular collar, cut in points, of white oilcloth; black oilcloth jester's hat, with three perpendicular points. Black bloomers and black shoes and slippers.

GROUCH: Black papermuslin smock, ragged at the bottom, and cut in the back to represent a hump; this hump stuffed with a small pillow. Black jester-shaped cap, with long, curved point in the center.

TICKER: Plain brown papermuslin slip. Headdress made of white buckram, painted silver to represent the glass part of a ticker machine, and fastened to a circle of black cardboard about a foot in diameter. This is worn over the head, the cardboard resting on the shoulders, and eyes, nose and mouth cut in the silver buckram. A long piece of tape is suspended from the top of the buckram.

DR. PSYCHE: Green sateen smock, with flaring sleeves, which hangs straight to about four inches below the knee. Emblems such as telescopes, moons, etc., painted around the bottom. Large ruff of mosquito netting, gilded. A chain of large links made of curtain rings, with a queer emblem on the end, is hung around her neck. Long, pointed, turned-up shoes of black oilcloth. Large pointed "witch" hat, painted black, made of cardboard. Gray hair arranged to look like a barrister's wig.

DOLLAR: Straight, knee-length smock of unbleached muslin, silvered with radiator silver; tin disks about the size of a dollar sewed all over the smock. Silver shoes and stockings. Headdress made of cardboard silvered to represent the dollar mark and arranged on a wire headband so as to rise perpendicularly from the forehead.

H. C. L.: Yellow sateen waist and bloomers with circular skirt to match, wide at the lower edge, wired with a barrel hoop to stand away from the figure; yellow satin

girdle; yellow shoes and stockings. Headdress made of an old-fashioned lampshade frame, wound with strips of yellow sateen and worn upside down. To the upper edges of the hat frame, the shoulders, and the wired edge of the skirt, inflated yellow balloons are attached.

OLD SHOE: Made of wood or heavy cardboard cut in form of a shoe and painted black. This should be on a float, with the "children" inside, but if a float is not available, have the "children" walk inside, carrying the framework on their protruding arms, their legs showing beneath it. If a shoe is not practicable, use a

COMMUNITY CHEST: A hollow box made of two packing cartons fastened together and painted black, with silvered hinges and lock. If this is not on a float, a person walks inside the chest, which is suspended on the shoulders by pieces of oilcloth fastened to the front and back, allowing the head to appear above the upper edge, with the cover of the box resting on top of the head. Holes cut in the sides for the arms to pass through. The "children" run alongside the chest.

CHIEFTAIN: Straight, canton flannel smock dyed ruby-red. Straight, unbleached muslin cape dyed the same color, draped across the shoulders and caught on the left shoulder with a large pasteboard buckle silvered and painted. Animal skins are worn under the cape, and girdled with a belt of brown oilcloth decorated with silver to form a conventional pattern. Helmet made of the crown of a derby hat, silvered. Sandals of linoleum with heavy cord for thongs. Legs and arms painted brown.

HIGH PRIEST: Long, embroidered coat to ankles; pleated ruffle of unbleached muslin, dyed orange, around the bottom. Bells cut out of black oilcloth sewed on around the bottom of the cloak over the ruffle, about four inches apart. Girdle with strip of black oilcloth down front, with a chain of brass curtain rings sewed on it.

Turban made of unbleached muslin dyed yellow and lined with crinoline to make it stand up about a foot from the head; this is shaped and sewed to a two-inch band of black oilcloth decorated with brass curtain rings; to the lower edge of the band is sewed a ruffle about six inches wide, extending from either side of the face around the back. The Priest carries a very tall curtain pole gilded, with a brass knob on the top, to represent a large walking stick.

MIRIAM: Long Turkish trousers and waist, made in one piece of orange silkaline. A bodice of white lace, gilded, bound with green sateen, cut like a brassière. A short "skirt" of green sateen, cut in petals and fastened to the bodice by crisscross small bands of green sateen, decorated with a line of gilt. Long, green sateen skirt, painted with gold peacock feathers around the bottom; suspended from the lower edge of the bodice under the arms and around the back. Ankle, wrist and arm bands of white oilcloth, gilded, and sandals made of the same material. Headdress: A tight-fitting cap made of canton flannel wrong side out, with a coxcomb of buckram from the middle of the forehead back over the crown of the head. Twisted, horn-shaped piece on either side of buckram wired. All of this gilded with radiator gilt. Fastened to the middle of the coxcomb and extending upward and backward, many long peacock feathers. Around the edge of the cap are sewed key rings gilded, and a band down under the chin holds the headdress on. Large earrings, chains of beads, rings, and so forth.

COCK: A foundation of brown papermuslin cut from a pajama pattern. Wings of the same material made of triangular pieces fastened down the middle of the back and attached to the under arm of the sleeve and covered, front and back, with graduated triangular pieces of yellow, black and brown papermuslin, cut pointed on the edges. A rooster tail of layers of yellow, black

and brown cut in strips and wired. The front of the "foundation" covered with parallel strips of the three shades, cut pointed on the lower edge. Cap also covered with small parallel strips, cut in the same points, with a circular collar of three layers to cover the joining of the cap with the waist. A red coxcomb, extending down over the center of the forehead, and yellow "spurs" sewed on the heels. The whole costume specked with spots of gold radiator paint.

MOONBEAMS: Foundation one-piece bloomers and waist, of pink silkaline, tie dyed in pastel shades to give an iridescent effect; this covered with a straight knee-length slip of white mosquito netting, silvered, on which Christmas tree silver-tinsel icicles are sewed. Slip confined by a band of rope tinsel, to give an Empire effect. Silver sleeves and stockings. Headdress: A tight-fitting cap-shaped framework made of wire wound with rope tinsel. Fastened perpendicularly to the top of the framework, and rising about a foot and a half from the top of the head is a straight piece of wire, to the top of which is attached a bunch of Christmas tree icicle tinsel, which falls down and around the hair.

STARDUST GIRLS: Full bloomers of yellow papermuslin, knee length; circular skirt made of white mosquito netting in three layers of graduated length, these skirts gilded and cut into wide strips. Star-shaped tunics of white oilcloth gilded. The whole costume sprinkled with Christmas snow. Gold shoes and stockings. Headdress made of a fillet of white oilcloth, gilded. To this are fastened irregular lengths of gold wire, extending upward like a crown. To the upper ends of these wires are pasted gold stars of different sizes.

HARVESTERS: Smocks made of cheesecloth, unbleached muslin, and canton flannel; some dyed in brilliant autumn shades; others dyed in the bright and dull autumn

shades, variegated to represent autumn leaves. Some of the smocks are girdled. Black shoes and stockings. Headdress made of autumn leaves, artificial fruit and grapes, and bittersweet berries.

PRIMITIVES: Straight, knee-length smocks of unbleached muslin, with a few of canton flannel dyed ruby-red, some of the costumes shading down to a red-brown. A few of the men wear straight, unbleached muslin capes dyed the same color and draped on one shoulder under a large cardboard buckle painted. Girdles and headbands of brown oilcloth, to resemble leather. The women wear jewelry made of brass curtain rings, spools and button molds dyed, and cheap glass beads. Their hair is bound with silvered strips of white oilcloth. (Silver paper may be used for this.) Sandals of linoleums, with heavy cord lacings. Arms and legs stained red-brown. All wear fur skins, which may be borrowed or made of canton flannel dyed and striped.

HEBREWS—*Dancing Girls:* Long, straight, narrow slips, cut up the sides to the hips, made of unbleached muslin dyed deep orange, the lower edges of these slips decorated in conventional designs with black paint. Bloomers of the same material dyed and striped horizontally with black paint. Stockings dyed orange, and sandals of linoleum with lacings of white tape, dyed orange. Black papermuslin, square headdress, confined with a headband of white oilcloth, gilded.

Candle Bearers: Ankle-length smock of unbleached muslin, with sleeves, dyed yellow-orange. Straight panel overdrape of the same material dyed deep orange and decorated at the lower edge in a conventional design with black paint. Black rope girdle tied in the front. Orange colored stockings; sandals with orange thongs. Turban headdress of unbleached muslin dyed orange, with black oilcloth headband confining the lower edge.

Women: Floor-length, straight gowns with flowing

sleeves, made of unbleached muslin and dyed deep orange. Girdle with a strip of the same material. Orange stockings and sandals; long straight veil of cheesecloth of the same color draped over the head. Men: Knee-length straight smock made of unbleached muslin, dyed yellow-orange; girdled with a strip of the same material. Oriental cape-coat of the same material, dyed deep orange. Orange stockings and sandals. Square headdress of same material dyed orange and confined with a narrow band of black oilcloth.

GREEKS: Underslips of cheesecloth, dyed blue-green, draped Greek style, with overdrapes of mosquito netting, dyed the same color as the dress. Dress banded at the neck and with diagonal bands across the chest, made of tape gilded. Head fillet of tape, also gilded.

PILGRIMS—*Women:* Long, full skirt and tight-fitting bodice of lavender unbleached muslin; plain white aprons and kerchiefs. Little tight-fitting Pilgrim caps, with streamers. A few wear short, straight capes.

Men: Bloomers and long smock coats made of purple-gray papermuslin; plain white circular collars, and wide belt with buckle made of cardboard, silvered. Black stockings, and shoes with silver cardboard buckles. Large Pilgrim hats made of cardboard painted black and decorated with a silver buckle. A few wear long, full capes.

BLUES: Short cheesecloth slips dyed blue and green. All over these are attached irregular squares of mosquito netting dyed weird shades of red, blue and green. Tight little Mephistopheles hats of black oilcloth, with a long tail suspended down the back. Black shoes and stockings.

NONSENSE: Plain, straight, knee-length slips of green silkaline. Headdress representing enormous Jack-o'-lanterns made of cardboard covered with pumpkin-colored, unbleached muslin; Jack-o'-lantern face cut in one side. Two green pumpkin leaves of crêpe paper

attached to the top of the pumpkin. Black shoes and stockings.

KULL-KOLD-KANNING-KLAN: Very full, floor-length, white cheesecloth gowns completely covering the figure. Headdress made of square of white cheesecloth worn over the head and face, with holes cut for the eyes. A two-pound coffee can tied to the top of the head with white tape. White shoes and stockings.

PAGES: Full blouses and bloomers of yellow papermuslin. Black oilcloth tunics. Headband of black patent leather an inch wide, with a long yellow plume made of yellow crêpe paper, wired. Yellow stockings; black slippers with black lacings.

FOREIGN GROUPS: Dressed in their national costumes.

COMMUNITY CHEST CHILDREN: Dressed in white, carrying emblems of the organizations which they represent.

PROPERTIES

Telescope and stand
Alarm clock
Crystal urn
Baskets of fruit
Baskets of vegetables
Pumpkins
Branches of autumn leaves
2 seven-branched candlesticks
Palm branches
Greek vases
urns
water bottles
Community chest or large shoe
Rope halter
Long table
Table drape
Incense
Pan for incense
Map
1 large compass
9 flashers
Sheaves of wheat
Cornstalks
Game—birds, rabbits, etc.
2 round shields
4 spears
Long walking stick
Hymn books
2 tapers
"Ambulance"
Gong
Stick hobbyhorses
Symbols
Serpentines
Torches
Political signs and banners.

MUSIC PLOT

I. "Romantic Overture," Kela-Bela.
Cue—*"Up and greet the guests."*

II. "Morris Dance," T. Tertius Noble. G. Schirmer, East 43rd Street, New York.
Cue—*"Let's toast the Harvest Moon—All together."*

III. "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."
Cue—*"Here they come."*

IV. "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come." Tune: St. George's Windsor.
Cue—*All groups in place at the end of hymn.*

V. "All Hail! We're Here, All Here."
Cue—*At the end of the game, "I See a Ghost."*

VI. "Oh, the Grouches Ain't What They Used to Be."
Cue—*Grouches are taken to seats and crowd stops singing.*

VII. "Gruesome—Misterioso" (27 measures), Gaston Borch. Belwin, 701 Seventh Avenue, New York.
Cue—*"Make them swallow you."*

VIII. Carrouselle, from "Swedish Song Plays." Jacob Bolin, New York.
Cue—*Halter is placed around the neck of H. C. L.*

IX. "Funeral March," Chopin (16 measures).
Cue—*"And here comes the table."*

X. March and procession of Bacchus from "Sylvia" (47 measures), Leo Delibes. G. Schirmer.
Cue—*"And bring in thankfulness our gift of Health"—Primitives run to circle formation.*

XI. "Serenata" (Allegro moderato and tempo), Mario Tarenghi. G. Schirmer.
Cue—*"We bring this thank-offering to the feast."*

XII. "To Thee, O Lord, Our Hearts We Raise" (Episcopal Hymnal), or "Thanksgiving Canticle," C.

E. Clemens (Episcopal Chant and Service Book).
Cue—*The candlesticks and palms are placed on the table by the Hebrews.*

XIII. "Dance of Egyptian Maidens," Harry Rowe Shelley. G. Schirmer.
Cue—*"Our faith in Beauty."*

XIV. Ballet music from "Faust" (No. 1), Gounod. G. Schirmer.
Cue—*"And give it still to-day, freedom to worship God."*

XV. "The Lord Is My Shepherd," Schubert.
Cue—*"Earth's deep treasure houses to bring our harvest home."*

XVI. "In Arcadia" (16 measures; omit introduction), Gaffy Sellars. Sam Fox Company, Cleveland, Ohio.
Cue—*When the Harvesters are in circle formation.*

XVII. "Jolly Is the Miller Who Lives by the Mill."
Cue—*"And all join in the revel till rise of the sun."*

XVIII. Harvest Dance.
Cue—*"You're worse than the curfew."*

XIX. "We Won't be Home Until Morning."
Cue—*"Let's go merrily and sing."*

XX. "Praise to God, Immortal Praise." Tune: Dix.

THE THREE THANKSGIVINGS *

A NOVEMBER HUMORESQUE

By

FAITH VAN VALKENBURGH VILAS

* Courtesy Playground and Recreation Association of America. Maintaining Community Service, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

PERSONS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

November
The Spirit of True Romance
Mr. Anyone
Mrs. Anyone
Thomas Anyone
Peggy Anyone
Ethel Anyone
Cora, *the maid*
The Spirit of Thanksgivings, Past
The Spirit of Thanksgivings, Present
The Spirit of Thanksgivings, Future
Pilgrims
Mrs. M. T. Heart
Lord Ab. Domen
Miss High Liver
Miss Turkey
The Mince Pie
The Pumpkin Pie
The Gravy
The Salad
The Celery
The Cranberry Sauce
The Bon-bons
Mr. Poor Relation
Mrs. Poor Relation
Pansy Poor Relation
Mr. Clerk
Mrs. Clerk
Clara Clerk

Natty Newsboy
Sally Seamstress
Douglas Dog

Time: The Present.
Place: The Town of Anywhere.
Scene: Home of the Anyone family.

THE THREE THANKSGIVINGS

Enter from behind closed curtains the SPIRIT OF NOVEMBER. *He is very tall and clothed in dark brown tights, over them a long cloak painted to look like autumn leaves. On his head is a crown of tiny pumpkins. He carries a staff made of a gnarled heavy branch and his feet are bare save for sandals. He stands a moment looking at the audience, then striking the floor with staff, he speaks.*

NOVEMBER.

Lo—I am here—and through the air
The first crisp tang of Winter creeps,
Beneath the mold all plant life sleeps,
And boughs stretch skyward bleak and bare.

Like suns, great golden pumpkins glow
Caught in the stubble of the field.
The distant hills long unrevealed
Lift up bald foreheads row on row.

Round cozy hearthstones tales are told
While leaping flames with shadows dance,
Now is the time when True-Romance
Must weave new stories from the old.

So, since he is not far away—
I'll call to him and bid him tell
An Autumn Tale—he does it well—
Ho, True Romance! Come hither, pray!

NOVEMBER [*aside to audience*]. He *is* a bit old-fashioned but you'll like him, I'm sure. [*Enter from back of hall*

and proceeding through audience to stage comes the SPIRIT OF TRUE ROMANCE. *He is in light blue tights. His costume is a mixture of all ages—a silver breastplate, a silver shield, a long flowing cloak of white, a silver helmet. He strides bravely through the audience.* NOVEMBER *comes to extreme front of stage to greet him.*]

NOVEMBER [*to audience*]. Pardon me, please. [*Whispers in ear of* ROMANCE, *who whispers back. Then* ROMANCE *nods understandingly, steps up on stage, turns to audience and speaks.*]

TRUE ROMANCE.

Since my good friend, in pumpkin crown
Has told me that you wish to hear
A tale that fits the time of year
When trees are bare and fields are brown,

With woof of whimsy—young and frail,
With warp of Truth—as old as Time,
In prose—in byplay—and in rime—
I'll weave you a Thanksgiving Tale.

[ROMANCE *takes staff from* NOVEMBER *and motions him to extreme right stage, himself moving extreme left where he taps twice loudly on floor with staff. Curtains slowly part showing a modern living room. A fireplace right, before which a comfortable divan is drawn. There are several good looking chairs well placed, a double door center back, a desk left back. As curtains part the* ANYONE FAMILY *is discovered;* MRS. ANYONE *and* PEGGY *on divan;* MR. ANYONE *standing with back to fire —rolling on his feet, his hands behind him;* THOMAS *standing looking at magazines on table;* ETHEL, *a flapper of fourteen, balancing on a low stool near fire. Every one as casual and commonplace as possible.* ROMANCE *turns to the audience and speaks confidentially.*]

ROMANCE. These are the Anyones—a very nice family

taking them by and large. Mr. Anyone is well to do, Mrs. Anyone is a bit of a climber, Tom has finished at Columbia—somewhat better off mentally than when he went in, Peggy is about to make her bow to society, and Ethel as you see an uncompromising Flapper. [*Enter* CORA *with after-dinner coffee.*] Oh, yes—this is Cora. [TOM *slowly moves a low table before his mother,* CORA *places coffee service on it.* MRS. ANYONE *pours the coffee with usual formalities. All are served except* ETHEL. *Exit* CORA.]

ETHEL. I don't see why I can't have coffee. I'm sure I'm perfectly grown-up—as much as I ever shall be.

TOM. I hope you *don't* grow any more leg. [ETHEL *draws the offending members under what there is of skirt.*]

MOTHER. Tom, don't be vulgar—or is that another new slang word for something else? I declare I cannot make you children out, you talk of "necking" and "mugging." I suppose in time we shall have an entirely new language.

TOM. I don't think it's vulgar to speak the truth, Mater. I think the kid's skirts grow shorter while she sleeps.

FATHER. Well, thank goodness they are *skirts.* What I can't stand are those awful knickerbocker costumes we meet on the country roads.

PEGGY. Skirts are coming down, my dears. I've seen several long ones on the street, and when I was in at Madame Marguerite's for my last fitting, she told me—

ETHEL [*disdainfully*]. MADAME MARGUERITE! Her name is Maggy Murphy. I tried her on some French the other day and she got all funny and red and called out very loud for her helper—that poor thin girl, you know—

PEGGY. Oh, hush! Speaking of Madame, she promised me my gown surely this afternoon and look at the time,—after 8 o'clock.

MOTHER. That reminds me—next week is Thanksgiving. Whom shall we ask to dinner?

PEGGY. I know! Let's ask Mrs. Heart. She's alone now that Gladys and Consuelo have gone to Italy. It would be

such a good chance to get into her good graces. She knows every one and goes everywhere.

TOM. Splendid! And maybe she'll ask me to Bond House for the holidays. Bill Suffering always goes and he says her parties are corking.

MOTHER. Very well, Mrs. Heart, if she will come. Who else?

FATHER. I would like to ask Lord Domen. You know—the man that's been sent over by the British Government. If we entertained him he might reciprocate when we go abroad. I'd not mind being a guest at Domen-on-Tweed.

MOTHER. Very well, I'll write at once to Lord Domen. Where is he staying? And Mrs. Heart too. But whom else shall we ask—some one they would be glad to meet.

PEGGY. Let's ask Miss High Liver.

TOM. She's a bore.

PEGGY. She may be a bore, but she has loads of money and beside she has the entrée to the most exclusive circles.

MOTHER. I'll write the letters at once [*moves to desk*]. Oh, here is some mail I overlooked. [*Glances over letters.*] One for you, Dad. [*She sits, writes three letters and seals them. Places them conspicuously on desk. Meanwhile.*]

FATHER [*opening envelope*]. Well, what can this be. I wish you'd see that I got my mail more promptly, my dear. [*Reads.*] I do declare! Listen to this—the nerve of the man—it's from Cousin Poor. "Dear Tom,—I hate to bother you with my troubles, but the landlord's raised the rent on me again and Ma and Pansy and me thought maybe we could come and spend Thanksgiving Week with you while we looked about for a cheaper place to live in. We are down to bedrock, Tom, and I've lost my job but I should get work to do at Xmas time." [*Crumpling letter.*] Of all the nerve—he's had as good a chance as I had to make good. We can't have 'em here all over the place when our distinguished friends are coming.

MOTHER. I suppose we ought to ask them.

PEGGY. Mother, what are you thinking of! Remember Mrs. Heart—

TOM. And Lord Domen.

MOTHER. Suppose we were all abroad. They'd have to do without us then.

FATHER. These careless, improvident people make me tired—only to-day, Clerk, you know Bill Clerk that works in our office, comes to me with a hard-luck story. Wife in the hospital, daughter sick with anemia. Why don't they look out for themselves, I say.

TOM. They're all beggars, that type. Just as I came up our steps a newsboy ran after me begging to buy his papers—said he was starving. All fakes these hard-luck stories, want to get something for nothing. And holiday times they are worse than ever. Guess they think "Thanksgiving" means we should *give* them all we have and be contented to receive their *thanks* in return.

ETHEL. Thanksgiving—I wonder what it really means? I'd like to meet Mr. Thanksgiving and ask him. [*Door bell rings—enter* CORA.]

CORA. Your gown, Miss Peggy, and the girl wants to see you, yourself. May she step in?

PEGGY. Yes. [*Exit* CORA. *Enter* SALLY SEAMSTRESS, *pale and wan, carrying an unwieldy box much too big for her.*]

SALLY. Excuse me, please, Miss Anybody, Madame Marguerite wanted me to show you how to hook up this dress—she changed it after you left—

PEGGY [*severely*]. She promised it this afternoon. Suppose I had wanted to wear it to a dinner party to-night.

SALLY. Oh, *did* you? Oh, I am *so* sorry, Miss Anyone. It was *my* fault, I'm not as well as I used to be and somehow I can't work as fast. I seem to fall asleep when it gets late. I can't keep my eyes open after eleven at night. I guess it's because I don't get enough to eat. It makes me sort of faint and my eyes peter out— [*A great noise is*

heard of calling and "Get out! Get out of here!," a running about in the outer regions of the house. Then through the door smashes Douglas Dog, very thin, with a large piece of cake in his mouth. He goes up to SALLY, *drops cake at her feet, she faints and they all go out after dog except* MOTHER, *who rings for* CORA. CORA *enters cap askew.*]

CORA. Oh, Madam, he got in through the area way, he's that fierce!!

MOTHER. Get a glass of water for this—this person—and get her out of here as quickly as you can. And then sweep up the awful mess that dog has made. [*Exit* MOTHER *and* CORA. CORA *returns with glass of water.*]

CORA [*looking at* SALLY]. Poor little thing—she looks hungry. [*Bathes her face with water.*]

SALLY [*coming to*]. Where is Douglas? Oh, have they hurt him! He knew I was hungry, he would never steal for himself, only for me. Oh, I must go to him. [SALLY *staggers out.* CORA *picks up cake crumbs, shaking her head.* ROMANCE *taps twice on floor with staff. Curtains close slowly.*]

NOVEMBER. Do you think that's a pretty play?

ROMANCE. No, not exactly. But true, unfortunately, to nature.

NOVEMBER. Do you think people are as heartless as all that?

ROMANCE. Not heartless, call it lack of imagination. They do not practice the "Put-yourself-in-his-place" attitude. But watch—the end is not yet. One little word was dropped that may change the tenor of the whole affair.

NOVEMBER. What word was that?

ROMANCE. Don't you remember, Ethel said, "I'd like to meet Mr. Thanksgiving"?

NOVEMBER. To be sure, to be sure.

ROMANCE. Well, she shall have her wish. [ROMANCE *taps floor twice with staff and curtains part. Scene same as before except coffee cups, etc., have been removed.*

FATHER *sits reading on one side the table,* MOTHER *on the other,* TOM *writing at desk,* PEGGY *playing softly on piano,* ETHEL *asleep on divan—curled up in corner.* TOM *looks up and sees* ETHEL.]

TOM. Mater, isn't Tubs ever going to learn to go to bed without being driven to it?

MOTHER. I wish you would not call Ethel Tubs. Ethel! Ethel! [*Goes to her and shakes her gently.*] Wake up, Ethel!

ETHEL [*waking with a jump*]. Oh, why did you wake me up? I was having the loveliest dream—

TOM. You'd better dream in bed, Tubs—I mean Ethel.

ETHEL. Oh, but it was so real, Mater dearest. Please, please let me tell you of my wonderful dream and I promise to go to bed every night from now on without being spoken to and—

MOTHER [*impressed by* ETHEL'S *earnestness*]. Well—tell us your dream and then be sure that you keep your part of the contract.

ETHEL [*seriously*]. I faithfully promise. Now you promise not to interrupt. Are you all comfy? [*She settles herself on divan—the family are all at attention listening to her.*] It was this way—I was sitting right—here—[*Lights go down, curtain slowly drops. Orchestra plays Jocelyn's "Lullaby" or other suitable music. House lights remain out. At close of music* ROMANCE *speaks.*]

ROMANCE. Sh—sh— Now the dream is coming. [*Curtains slowly part on scene same as before with* ETHEL *asleep on divan alone. Dim light should be used throughout this scene. Bell is heard.* CORA *enters with card and says.*]

CORA. Three people to see you, Miss Ethel.

ETHEL [*rubbing her eyes and rousing herself, reads card*]. "The Three Thanksgivings"—well, I never! Show them in, CORA. [*Exit* CORA. ETHEL *puts her hand to her hair, pulls her dress down—stands. Enter the* THREE THANKSGIVINGS—THANKSGIVING PAST, *dressed as a Pilgrim Father.* THANKSGIVING PRESENT *is very, very fat with a great Fal-*

staffian stomach and is in garish costume, very rich and gorgeous. THANKSGIVING FUTURE *is tall and slim and is completely covered with a gray veil which hides the face and figure. They all step in.* PAST *goes up and shakes hands with* ETHEL.]

PAST. You wished to see us, dear Ethel, and being accommodating, we could not refuse to grant you your heart's desire. I am Thanksgiving Past; this [*to* PRESENT] is Thanksgiving Present, and this [*to* FUTURE] is Thanksgiving Future.

ETHEL. Oh, won't you all sit down? I am so glad you have come. [*They sit.*]

PAST. What did you wish of us, dear Lady?

ETHEL [*much pleased at the courtly manner, trying to pull down her skirts over her fat legs*]. You see, I just was wondering what it was all about—I mean what you were all about. Thanksgiving and all, you see?

PAST. Well, of course, as the oldest, I can tell you what started us. Then you ought to know from experience a little about Brother Present. And as for Future, dear young Lady, that rests largely with you and your generation. Tell me if I bore you?

ETHEL. Not at all—I'm so interested!

PAST. I was born 'way back in the early days when this Land of Liberty was young. I was born of a Great Thankfulness that rose from the hearts to the lips of men when they found how bountiful were God's fields and how pleasant were his pastures. In those days they lifted up their voices in full-throated hymns of Thankfulness—a giving of Thanks to Him from whom all blessings flow. Look! it was thus my early days were spent— [*Through the double door, center, a group of* PILGRIMS—*four in number, 2 men, 2 women, are seen. The men carry blunderbusses. They advance a little on stage and stand singing Doxology—vanish.*]

PAST. Now Brother Present will tell you of *his* characteristics—

PRESENT [*in wheezy fat voice*]. I think we have left off singing, yes, and praising too, and the *giving* is most to the *inner man.* [*He rubs his fat tummy and chuckles.*] Let me show you [*wheeze—wheeze—wheeze*], it's so hard [*wheeze*] for me [*wheeze*] to talk. [*He chokes.*]

ETHEL [*solicitously*]. Shall I pat you on the back—or will you have a glass of water?

PRESENT. WATER!! [*Makes a wry face.*] Never! But if you don't mind, I'll demonstrate rather than talk.

ETHEL. Do demonstrate! I don't mind. [PRESENT *goes to door, stands as a lackey, announces each guest as they enter.*]

PRESENT. Mrs. M. T. Heart. [*Enter* MRS. HEART. *She is very pompous with an awful vacant expression. Wears very low cut evening gown and much, much jewelry. Sits down very impressively and gazes about with her lorgnette.*] Lord Ab. Domen. [*Enter His Lordship in immaculate clothes, a long sandy mustache, a monocle and a very la-de-da manner. He sits left, hems and haws.*] Miss High Liver. [*Enter* MISS LIVER, *very thin, very angular, a great nose. Extremely low cut gown. She is much made up—with hair decidedly not her own. Sits languidly near His Lordship.*] Now this is what *I* give these good people to think about. [*Faintly and far off are heard the first strains of the "Danse Macabre." As it grows nearer, into the room single file with grotesque lurchings and unsteady gait come the* TURKEY, *the* PIES, *the* GRAVY, *the* SALAD, *the* CELERY, *the* CRANBERRY SAUCE *and the* BON-BONS. *They march around circling in and out among the chairs. Then stop as music stops—suddenly.*]

ETHEL [*after a long pause*]. Why don't they say something? Why don't they talk?

PRESENT. Why don't who talk?

ETHEL. Why, Lord Ab. Domen and the ladies.

PRESENT. My dear, what have they to say? They do not think, that is, only semi-occasionally and this isn't one of the occasions. They have their minds on what they wear

and what I shall give them for their tummies—as is eminently fitting and proper.

ETHEL. Oh!! [*The music starts in again.* TURKEY *and the* MINCE PIE *each grab a hand of* MRS. HEART *and slowly waltz her about in a circle.* PUMPKIN PIE *and* GRAVY *do same to* LORD AB. DOMEN, *and* SALAD *and* CELERY *to* MISS LIVER. *They dance wilder, the music faster 'til one by one they trip up, first* DOMEN, *then* MRS. HEART, *then* MISS LIVER. *All three fall face downwards, groaning, their two escorts sitting on top of them gleefully.* PRESENT *rubs his hands and laughs*—]

ETHEL. Don't laugh! It isn't the least funny. It's awful! I think you are horrid.

PRESENT. Oh, no, that's always what happens when you have rich food, my dear, all in the course of nature, all in the course of nature. Don't you think it's a pretty sight?

ETHEL. Pretty! I think it is awful. I did not know Thanksgiving food would make such beasts of people. Does it always!

PAST. It did not in my day.

FUTURE. I hope it won't in mine.

PRESENT. Oh ho! You prudes, you cannot stand the truth. But I tell it to you—I tell it to you—

ETHEL [*to* PRESENT]. Won't you, please, help those people to stand up and send them home?

PRESENT. Just as you say, my dear, just as you say. [*He helps them up and each goes off groggily accompanied by two partners.*]

ETHEL. Oh, Future, I do hope you won't subject me to such a sight when your time comes. It makes me feel all horrid and selfish. Does Thanksgiving affect all people that way?

FUTURE. I don't know, I cannot tell—

ETHEL. Does it, Past?

PAST. No, my dear young lady, no, it is only selfish Thanksgivings that make beasts of people. If you could

gather together, from some great unselfish motive, a group of needy fellow mortals, you would find things very different.

ETHEL. Needy fellow mortals—[*Pause.*] I know, you mean our cousins the Poor Relations, and Sally Seamstress and, oh, and Douglas Dog, and the Clerk family Father told about, and the Newsboy—what was his name—oh, yes, Natty. That's whom you mean, is it not?

PAST. You must find out for yourself, my dear, experience is the only teacher.

ETHEL. Future, can't you tell me anything? Can't you let me see if you approve? Please, let me look into your eyes?

FUTURE. I cannot tell you. You may not see my eyes—I am the Future.

ETHEL. I think I know. Somehow it seems to me the answer is in my very own heart. [*She goes to the desk.*]

PRESENT. What are you going to do?

ETHEL. I am going to tear up all these invitations that Mother wrote and send others to the Poor Relations and Sally and Natty and the Clerks and the rest.

PRESENT. Don't do it, you will be sorry. You'll never be asked to any of Mrs. Heart's affairs—never, and think how proud you'd be to have a real Lord at dinner. And Miss Liver can take you to the opera. Come, come, don't be a little fool.

ETHEL. I am not a fool, thank you, and I *shall* write these letters. [*She goes to desk, sits,* PRESENT *sneaks slowly out of door, very crestfallen.* PAST *comes close to* ETHEL.]

PAST. Never mind the letters, my dear, the wish is mother to the deed. Listen! [*Points to door.*]

ETHEL [*rising with a happy smile as door bell rings*]. Oh, who can it be? [*Enter talking and laughing*—MRS. POOR RELATION, MR. POOR RELATION, PANSY.] Oh, cousin Pansy [*kissing her*], and Cousin Poor, I am so glad to see you. [*All embrace—the* RELATIONS *are very humbly*

dressed.] Sit down, do, and let me take off your things. [*She helps remove their worn, pathetic outer garments. Bell again.*]

ETHEL [*at door—enter the* CLERK *family*]. Oh, how nice, it's Mr. and Mrs. Clerk and Clara. I want you to meet my cousins, the Relations. [*There is a happy buzz of voices.* MR. CLERK *is quite stooped and gray, a Dickens character. His wife is a little old lady in shawl and bonnet.* CLARA *is modest in dress but wan and pale. Bell rings.*]

ETHEL [*enter* NAT, SALLY *and* DOUGLAS]. Oh, goody! I am so glad you could come, and dear old Douglas [*patting him. She bustles about taking off outer garment, which* CORA *removes gingerly from room.* DOUGLAS *cavorts about licking every one's hands and all seem so happy in a quiet modest way. Enter* CORA.].

CORA. Just a minute, Miss Ethel. [*They whisper.* ETHEL *laughs and goes to piano where she plays a few chords of Auld Lang Syne. The guests sing and hum. Very chastely and subdued through door Right back, single file, the food enters. Each one goes decorously and takes a guest on his arm and they march quickly and happily into the dining room,* DOUGLAS *cavorting restrainedly in the rear.* PAST *goes out last smiling.* ETHEL *turns to* FUTURE.]

ETHEL. Future, I like you best of all. You are the nicest part of the Past and Present, if he had any nice part, with none of the disagreeable things mixed in.

FUTURE. Now I can let you see my eyes, dear. Come, lift my gray veil. [*She does. A lovely woman in white stands revealed.*]

ETHEL. You are lovely. Oh, how lovely you are! But I think I have seen you somewhere, where—? Do you remember me?

FUTURE. You may have seen me, for I go by another name as well as Thanksgiving.

ETHEL. What is your other name?

FUTURE. You may call me LOVE.

ETHEL. Oh— [*The happy sound of voices is heard.*] I must go to them. Come, Love, will you not sit at the head of our table? [*Curtain closes. House lights do not go up.*]

NOVEMBER. Now I liked that part. Was it all really a dream?

ROMANCE. It was Truth and Romance and Love, the stuff that dreams are made of,—yes, and many other things beside. It is a little recipe of my own which I am not at liberty to divulge. But let us see what happens to Ethel when she has told her family about this dream. [*Curtain opens. Family seated about stage as before when curtain fell on* ETHEL'S *words "It was this way."*]

ETHEL. Was not that a lovely dream? And [*getting up going to her father*], Father darling, let us have Love sit at the head of our table this year and let's invite all the dear Hungry Ones and let the Rich Friends shift for themselves.

FATHER. Well— Well—I don't know but it would be a good idea. What do you say, Mater?

ETHEL. Yes, what about it, Mater?

MOTHER [*going to desk*]. I'll tear up these [*tears up three letters and sits*] and now what is Cousin Poor Relations' address, Thomas?

FATHER. Wait, I will look at the letter [*hand in pocket, fishing for letter*].

ETHEL [*dancing in delight*]. Don't forget a *Special* invitation for Douglas Dog. [*Curtain.*]

NOVEMBER.

How quaintly Romance did the tale impart
Of Human Frailties and Triumphant Love,
Showing that the Great Spirit from Above
Moves in mysterious ways to touch man's heart.

Romance, we thank you—go your homeward way—
But know that, going, you have left behind,
Food for the soul, the heart, the eye, the mind—

That will remain with us for many a day.

ROMANCE [*stepping center stage and addressing audience*].

I now, alas! must take my leave of you
And bid new friends [*to audience*] and old [*to* NOVEMBER] Adieux! [*to audience*] Adieux!

[ROMANCE *clasps hands with* NOVEMBER. *As music softly plays the March from "Aïda,"* ROMANCE *moves out through the audience to exit at back of hall whence he calls: "Adieux"! Exit. Music stops.* NOVEMBER *waves hand to him.*]

NOVEMBER.

Yes—now the time has come to break the spell.
God bless Romance! God keep you, friends! Farewell!

[*Music softly plays "Auld Lang Syne" from beginning of* NOVEMBER'S *speech until he is off. He disappears between curtains, music fades away.*]

[CURTAIN]

DIRECTIONS FOR COSTUMING THE HUMORESQUE

NOVEMBER: A monk's robe of brown with here and there a splotch of bright autumn color painted or sewed on like autumn leaves. A rope girdle, bare legs, brown sandals, a crown of tiny pumpkins either painted on cardboard or actual tiny rubber balls painted a pumpkin color and fastened to crown. A staff made of a small tree with a few withered leaves still clinging to it.

ROMANCE: Dye a suit of underwear deep blue and socks to match. Make a pasteboard breastplate, paint it silver with aluminum radiator paint. Take the crown of an old derby hat and silver that in the same way. Make a pasteboard visor of silvered cardboard. From

the back of the neck to the ground should fall a circular cloak of white with a silvered edge (use radiator paint).

MRS. ANYONE: Conventional afternoon gown.

MR. ANYONE: Smart business suit.

PEGGY ANYONE: Very modish and gay-colored afternoon frock.

THOMAS ANYONE: College-cut clothes.

ETHEL ANYONE: Flapper costume, bobbed hair, etc.

CORA: Black dress, white cap, cuffs, collar.

SALLY SEAMSTRESS: Very faded worn dark dress, old black straw sailor hat, ill-fitting jacket, huge box.

DOUGLAS DOG: Dye a one-piece sleeping garment of canton flannel a dog-colored brown, also a yard and a half of canton flannel extra. When all is dry, splotch the brown garment with black splotches of paint. Out of the plain goods make a cap that will fit close to the neck, and attach it to the garment, leaving a small space for the eyes, nose and mouth of the actor to be seen. Then cut ears (double), it may be necessary to stuff them to make them perky enough. One should go up, the other hang down. Cut a fringe of canton flannel for a fuzzy edge. Sew this on ears and ears to cap. Cut a strip for the tail and stuff that down to three inches from the end you sew on to costume and six inches from the other end. Cut this end into nice fluffy strips. Make mittens for the hands and feet unless costume has feet in it. Paint the cap with black splotches here and there. Douglas should be a small, very agile young person and practice walking like a dog.

PILGRIM SINGERS: Men same as Thanksgiving Past. Women in Priscilla costumes.

THANKSGIVING PAST: Pilgrim costume.

THANKSGIVING PRESENT: Falstaff costume. Garish, huge, padded stomach, unhealthy bulbous nose, red splotches on face.

THANKSGIVING FUTURE: Under garment flowing white Grecian robe with golden girdle and golden sandals. All this completely covered on entrance and until dénouement with two squares of cheese cloth or mosquito netting dyed gray and falling several inches on floor. She will have to move very slowly to keep completely covered. Make a halo of cardboard gilded for her head. This will hold the gray away from her face.

MRS. M. T. HEART: Gorgeous modern costume, much jewelry.

LORD AB. DOMEN: Very tight light trousers, spats, cut-away coat, monocle, drooping mustache.

MISS HIGH LIVER: Vivid, fashionable and extreme costume. Jewelry.

THE TURKEY: Costume of shiny brown—dye underwear for body part. For wings, make sleeves twice the length of the arm. Actor will hold a stick in each hand turned up to represent wings. (N. B. Turkey is already roasted.) For drumsticks make of the same brown that sleeves are made of, a leg-o'-mutton sleeve to fit both legs. Stuff these after they are on. Make a collar reaching high above the head so that nothing of head can be seen. This is the neck of turkey. Place green tissue paper cut to look like parsley in wings.

CRANBERRY: Cranberry-colored costume with about a dozen small balls painted to match hanging from sleeves and in crown on head.

THE PIES: Take hoops as large as possible, cover with cambric or heavy paper. Paint the little cuts that a pie has in center and make the edges look as though indented. Hang these disks around the neck of the actor whose costumes can be simple bathing suits.

THE CELERY: Flowing costume, Grecian, in two shades of celery green—dyed cheesecloth. Celery leaves in hair.

GRAVY: Dye underwear a nice rich gravy color. Hang on it from any place, all over it in fact, small bunches of onions. Cut long strips of any material dyed to

match the gravy. Hang these to ends of fingers. Let them reach on the ground trailing and dripping. Gravy should lift arms high above his head frequently and let the strips tremble and drip "gooily."

BON-BONS: Gay Columbine costume of tarlatan. To it hang little boxes or pasteboard shapes covered with bright many-colored paper—gilt and silver. Let these be four or five inches large at least. Make a bright cap for the head of gilt or silver paper like a bon-bon.

SALAD: On a green base, sew crinkled paper cut in large pieces to look like great green lettuce leaves. Crinkle it around the edge. Sew these on at the waist so they form a short skirt. Make a headdress of yellow like a wig falling down over the shoulders. This to represent mayonnaise dressing.

THE POOR RELATIONS: Worn shabby clothes—pathetic in the extreme. Country style.

THE CLERK FAMILY: Same—only citified poverty.

NATTY NEWSBOY: Bare legs, ragged trousers, torn shirt, greasy cap, dirty hands, smudgy face, bundle of Extras.

MUSIC WHICH MAY BE USED IN THE HUMORESQUE

OVERTURE—"In Autumn" .....Edward MacDowell
November enters between curtains on last bars of music. Collection Woodland Sketches price $1.25.

TRIUMPHAL MARCH—"Aïda," price 50c.
From November's words "He is a bit old fashioned" until Romance is on stage.

LULLABY from JOCELYN .....Goddard
Play from Ethel's words "It was this way" through until Romance speaks.
Berceuse from Jocelyn, price 50c.

PILGRIMS' SONG—"Doxology"
Start when Pilgrim group advances on stage.

The Most Popular Hymns—Hines, Hayden & Eldridge, price, $1.00.

Dance of Viands—"Danse Macabre" .....Saint Saëns
First strains start when food files in room while they march around. Starts again as food grabs the hands of guests and ends when Ethel says, "Don't laugh!—" Price $1.50.

Recessional of Romance—Triumphal March—"Aïda"
Play from time November and Romance clasp hands until Romance exits.

Finale—"Auld Lang Syne"
Play softly from November's words, "Break the Spell—" until end.
Community Song Book, price 15c.

The above music may be obtained from G. Schirmer, 3 East 43rd St., New York City.

SOJOURNERS *

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By

ANNA HARNWELL and ISABELLE MEAKER

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CHARACTERS

JOHN DEBENHAM
DEBORAH DEBENHAM
ROGER
PRUDENCE } *their children*
DAVID
JAN HUIDEKOPER
FRANZ HUIDEKOPER, *his son*

SOJOURNERS

It is the city of Leyden in the autumn of 1620. On the left and running part way across the back of a Dutch garden is the ell of a simple cottage. It has a long covered porch or stoop with seats on it, plain simple benches. A door leads from this stoop into the main part of the house. Farther back another door leads into the ell, which is the kitchen.*

At the right of this is a gate opening onto the street, and from this gate a brick wall runs, completely enclosing the garden.

A walk of flagstones leads from the kitchen to the stoop. Against the wall some English ivy hangs. It is not very well cared for. Some vegetables, late lettuces and beans are growing in the back of the garden, and in front the ground has been carefully cultivated ready for planting.

Near the kitchen door stands a washtub on a bench. A bright pan hangs against the house near this door. A basket of vegetables,—cabbages, carrots and beets—stands on the ground near the kitchen door.

DEBORAH *is working in the front of the garden making a small trench with a trowel.*

DEBORAH [*calling*]. Prudence! Prudence! Daughter!

PRUDENCE [*from the kitchen*]. Yes, mother. One moment. [*There is a pause, and then* PRUDENCE *appears in the kitchen doorway. She is a pretty young English girl*

* The *Speedwell* sailed for England in the summer of 1620, but for dramaturgic purposes the authors have placed the action of the play a few weeks later.

of about eighteen years of age. Both she and DEBORAH *wear the simple Pilgrim dress—a full dark skirt with plain waist, a white kerchief folded across the breast, and a large white apron. A close-fitting white cap turned back below the ears completes the costume.* PRUDENCE'S *hands are white with flour.*] I was just putting the cover on the tart, Mother dear. What wouldst thou?

DEBORAH [*smiling*]. There is no haste. When thou hast the tart in the oven, bring me that basket of bulbs on the window sill, the ones Meffrau Van Aachen brought me.

PRUDENCE. Oh, Mother, art going to plant those now? The ones she said were called "The Break of Day"? Do let me help thee! I'll have the tart in the oven in the twinkling of an eye. [*She runs into the kitchen.*]

DEBORAH [*calling*]. Take heed that in thy haste thou does not spoil the tart. Remember 'tis thy father's favorite.

PRUDENCE [*from within*]. I know. [*In a moment* PRUDENCE *returns with a small basket of bulbs. She stands by* DEBORAH *handing them to her as she plants them.*] Now shall I plant awhile, Mother, while thou dost hold the basket?

DEBORAH. No, I'll plant these. They are so choice I can trust no one with them but myself.

PRUDENCE [*pouting a little*]. Yet thou trustest me to make Father's favorite tart.

DEBORAH [*smiling*]. Thou hast had much practice and experience in that, dear Prudence. These precious bulbs from Meffrau Van Aachen are new even to me. [*Measuring.*] She said as far apart as just twice their width, and as deep as is their own depth. Dost think that is right?

PRUDENCE [*she stoops and measures with one of the bulbs*]. It seems so, Mother. [*She watches* DEBORAH *for a few moments, then asks:*] Were there no tulips in England, Mother dear?

DEBORAH. Not such as these. In my youth we had a fair garden full of many flowers which our old gardener tended.

After I wed I had no time for flowers. I had my babes to care for, and thy father tilled his fields. Then we were in such constant fear of mind and body we could not enjoy the peace of gardens. Thou wert too small to remember the dangers and torments of those Sabbath meetings, spies and soldiers always on our track. Each week almost we were forced to seek a new haven where we might praise our Maker. Here all is quiet and content. Here we are free, and I may rejoice in the beauty of my flowers, which are God's handiwork as well as those more useful herbs. [*She indicates the vegetables growing in the garden beyond.*]

PRUDENCE. Mother, I believe that thou too dost love this Holland better than thy native England.

DEBORAH. I, *too!* Thou canst not remember England, child. Thou wast too young.

PRUDENCE. Indeed, I well remember the night we lay all through the dark upon the shore waiting till dawn to take the boat which brought us here. I can feel the very terror in my heart when Father warned us what we were to do if soldiers came. I never can forget his words.

DEBORAH [*rising*]. Canst thou indeed? I thought thou wast too small. David and thou sat silent in my arms while Roger took his turn as sentinel. What else dost thou remember of that time?

PRUDENCE. I can remember little else but that one night. I only know I feel this is my home. I love this quaint old town. I love all Holland, it seems to me. Are we not very happy here, Mother?

DEBORAH [*coming closer to her and looking inquiringly at her*]. Why, Prudence, what is it? Why art thou so suddenly rejoicing in thy lot? What makes this old Dutch city seem so fair?

PRUDENCE [*hesitating and blushing*]. Oh, Mother—last night—last night—Franz and I—he loves me, Mother dear. He'll wed thy little Prudence. He saith he'll work so hard that he may save enough to come to father—

DEBORAH [*taking her tenderly in her arms*]. My little girl! My Prudence! So that is it! So love hath come to thee! Franz is a sturdy lad and gentle. I wish he were of English birth. I fear thy father—

PRUDENCE [*drawing back and looking at her mother earnestly*]. Oh, Mother, that is what I told him. These past months Father seemeth to draw away from our Dutch neighbors. He scolded David but last week for walking so often with the Van Doorns and Grootens. He bade him see more of English lads. When Franz spoke my heart was filled with joy, and yet I feared. He saith he will wait in patience till he can buy a cottage of his own where we can live. Then will he come to Father. Franz hopes it may not be long, for Meinherr Huidekoper hath taken him already in his own counting house. Oh, Mother, say thou thinkest that Father will consent.

DEBORAH. My daughter, whatever thy father doth, it will be that which he feels is right in the sight of God his Maker. We can ask no more. Together we will hope and pray that God's will and thy heart's desire may be the same. Here comes thy brother Roger. [ROGER *enters the gate as she speaks. He comes from the left. He is a stern young man about twenty-four years of age. He is dressed in the high Pilgrim hat, short trousers, long waistcoat and cape, long heavy stockings and stout low shoes with buckles. As he comes in* PRUDENCE *makes him a little curtsy.*]

PRUDENCE. Good evening, Brother. [*Suddenly.*] Oh, I forgot my tart. A gooseberry tart, Roger, made of the largest we have seen this year. It must not burn. [*She runs into the kitchen.*]

ROGER [*He comes slowly down to where his mother is standing. He is obviously uneasy about something.*]. Mother, Prudence should have more decorum of mien. She is a woman grown and should put aside childish ways. [*He speaks with evident irritation, but his mother's reply apparently takes no heed of it.*]

DEBORAH. Ah, Roger, hurry her not to woman's estate.

Leave her in the sunshine while she may enjoy it. Cares and shadows come soon enough.

ROGER [*moodily*]. Indeed, thou speakest truly. Is my father returned?

DEBORAH. Thy father is at the quay. He looks anxiously for word from England. Then, too, he went to hear more of that noble ship of which word came this morn that it was wrecked upon the Goodwins. I pray some souls were saved.

ROGER. I'd give my right hand if it had been saved!

DEBORAH [*looking at him in wonder at his vehemence*]. Why, Roger, was some one on it of our acquaintance?

ROGER [*laconically*]. No, Mother.

DEBORAH [*curiously*]. Thou dost not seem in spirits, lad. Thy father, too, is not himself of late. Something seems weighing on his mind.

ROGER. The hand of the Lord is heavy on us all.

DEBORAH. My son! What is it? Something is amiss?

ROGER. 'Tis naught, Mother—but—

DEBORAH. Roger! My lad! Is something wrong at the counting house? Thou hast not been dismissed?

ROGER. Nay, Mother, not that, indeed. I am in high favor with Meinherr Schmidt. Oh—I know not how to make thee understand. Dost remember how Father did confide to me certain monies he had saved and which he would have me keep within our strong box at the counting house?

DEBORAH [*anxiously*]. Yes, Roger. Oh—thieves have not broken in—

ROGER [*watching his mother to see how she acts*]. Nay, Mother. Let me unfold the thing. In brief, I heard Meinherr Schmidt in conference explain how gold could be returned tenfold with little risk. [*He hesitates.*] Well—I might do the thing if I had time. If only Father doth not call for his gold too soon.

DEBORAH. Oh, my son, thou must not use the monies of thy father in a venture!

ROGER. Oh, Mother, all business is a venture. Thou dost not understand. Women never do. [*Again watching her.*] But if Herr Schmidt should wish it for a loan—

DEBORAH. He should come to thy father—not to thee. Tell him that, my son.

ROGER [*irritated*]. Oh, Father doth not understand these matters as would a Hollander. He is all English!

DEBORAH [*astonished and disturbed*]. Thou too art English, Roger. Why art thou so impatient? What is wrong? I know there is something. Hast thou lent the gold?

ROGER. Nay, Mother, I have lent it not. But do thou as I say and all will still be well. That is why I came to thee. If Father speaks aught concerning it, persuade him to let it lie. Thou hast much influence with him—

DEBORAH [*much troubled*]. Roger, my son, speak not so bitterly. What is amiss? What of thy father's savings?

ROGER. Nothing, Mother. [*There is a pause.*] I wish I had not spoken. Thou lookest as though I were in truth a thief and had taken that which was not mine own. Now, must I continue on my way. I go an errand of business for Herr Schmidt. I will return for supper.

DEBORAH [*pleading*]. Tell thy father, Roger, my son. Tell him all that troubles thee.

ROGER. It's naught, I tell thee, Mother. It is business. All is well.

DEBORAH [*anxiously*]. Is the gold safe?

ROGER [*impatiently*]. Oh, Mother. I am in haste. Why should not the gold be safe in the strong box? Hold thy peace, Mother, if thou wouldst have all things go smoothly. Remember, I'm a man and know my business. [ROGER *goes out, turning when he goes through the gate to the right.* DEBORAH *stands in troubled thought for a moment, then taking up the empty basket goes slowly into the kitchen.* JOHN *and* DAVID *enter by the gate. They come from the left.* JOHN DEBENHAM *is a man nearing fifty years of age. He is an upright, conscientious Englishman, whose soul and the souls of mankind are ever his first*

thought. DAVID *is a comely lad of about sixteen. He is like his mother, tractable and sweet.* JOHN *has evidently been rebuking the boy for they come in talking and* DAVID'S *first speech is evidently in answer to an accusation of his father's.*]

DAVID. Father, I meant no wrong. I took but one small glass of rum with the others. Just a taste. Even the others took but little. We were not drunk. We did but try to see what it was like.

JOHN. A taste thou sayest! Hast thou forgot the scripture? "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." I found thee, my son, with the rabble in the street, talking their tongue—thou—an English lad! When I thought thee at thy books.

DAVID. Pastor Robinson had dismissed me. I cannot seem to learn his Latin and Hebrew. It is so dull. What care I for the troubles of the Jews which were so long ago? The others do not spend these sunny hours upon their books.

JOHN [*pacing impatiently up and down the walk while* DAVID *stands near the stoop*]. The others' souls may yet rot in perdition, but it is my duty to save thine, my son. Have I not told thee many times and oft, thou art an English lad, and thou shalt do as other English boys? Thou art not to be as these Holland youth with no thought but the counting house—or worse, the ale house. Already thy mother tongue smacks of this Dutch speech. I will have thee be a pastor. Thou shalt preach the word of God.

DAVID. But Roger is in the counting house. Why didst thou not make him a preacher? He is fitted for the task. He loves to preach.

JOHN [*he pauses in his walk and comes to* DAVID]. David! Speak not so of Roger. He is different. He cares not for the things of this world. But he went to work because we had not then the gold so he could spare the time for study. He was a grown lad when we landed on these shores, and he had ever to help to earn our daily bread. But always is his mind on higher things. He is a strong

rock in a surging sea. But thou art growing soft. Thou seemest to have no strength to withstand temptation. And more, thou has forgotten England and thy birth.

DAVID. Thou hast often said, Father, that England drove thee forth. Why should I wish to be remembering so unkind a land?

JOHN. The English king and his papist followers did drive us forth, but he could not take our birthright nor the birthright of our sons. [*Motioning* DAVID *to the door from the stoop.*] Go now within and read the book of Job and learn two psalms, and see that thou canst presently repeat them to me in English with no trace of Holland tongue.

DAVID [*bowing his head*]. Yes, Father. [*He goes into the house.* DEBORAH, *who has heard the voices, comes to the kitchen door.*]

DEBORAH [*anxiously*]. What is it, John? Is David wayward? Remember he is not yet seventeen.

JOHN [*speaking sternly as is his wont, but tenderly*]. Dost thou remember what I was at seventeen? And Roger? He was at earnest work helping me with the cares of the family. I know that David is not all to blame. He takes his color from these Dutch lads, his companions.

DEBORAH. I know, John. He is like me. All lads can not be such as thou wert. [*She comes close to him and looks up into his face, speaking tenderly.*] Dost remember when first we met in that old garden by the sea? We never thought then that we should see such hardships as we have seen. Often still at night I waken and remember those dreadful days when thou didst languish in the common jail, because we'd had the meetings at our house, and would not go to church.

JOHN. Those were hard days, my Deborah, but they were for the strengthening of our souls.

DEBORAH. Dost always love me, John? Thou seemest so distant sometimes. I know it is a weakness, but I am but a woman after all, and we rejoice always in affection.

JOHN [*taking her hands in his, and pressing his lips to*

her forehead]. Deborah, wife, indeed I love thee. I often feel as in those earlier days when first we met, and I so loved the temple of thy soul I feared I should forget the soul itself. I feel my heart swell with pride at Roger, and again it melts when I behold the beauty of our Prudence. David is still a lad but he gives promise, and thou, my Deborah, art the very apple of mine eye. Always I strive that we may be fit vessels to serve our Maker. But now, as I entered at the gate, I caught the odor of gooseberry tart, my favorite dish thou knowest, and suddenly a wave came over me of sensual delight in feasting. I fought it down as I have done before, but it will come again. Comfort doth press on us as it would stifle our immortal souls which cannot breathe in such surroundings. Strength and growth come from striving 'gainst the fleshly lusts, but youth should not be tried too far. I fear we have tarried too long in this land of milk and honey. I have for many months been making plans how we might leave it all, but I know not how they will issue.

DEBORAH [*with anxiety*]. Thou wouldst not return to England, John?

JOHN. Not England, Deborah, but that great land across the sea, America, is where my heart is set. I have not told thee before for I know not yet when we can go. I wrote to Cousin William Leeds in Kent who keepeth ever in touch with all the movements of our brethren, for news concerning this ship, the *Mayflower,* which he had written of. I did inquire if he could get us passage on that boat. I look for news to-day.

DEBORAH. But—John—the *Speedwell*—

JOHN. I know, the *Speedwell* goes day after to-morrow, but I would not trust that ship for so prolonged a journey. If we can get passage upon the *Mayflower* we will go on the *Speedwell* to England. Many have taken places in her for the whole voyage, as thou knowest, but I fear she is not entirely seaworthy, and so I've warned them. It will take many weeks, and mariners say it is a voyage fraught

with much danger from storm and tempest. But if William can get us room upon the *Mayflower* we will start upon the morrow's morn.

DEBORAH [*hesitatingly*]. But, John—the time is so short —and the children—they are so happy here—

JOHN. Happy, Deborah? How should a true Christian value mere happiness? Hast thou forgot the Lord's words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God"? Thou and I have suffered much and it hath given us strength. Like Paul we too have had stripes and imprisonments, tumults and labors. That was in England. Shall we keep our children always in this sheltered haven denying them those very hardships which have been food for our souls?

DEBORAH. But, my husband—methought we suffered that they might be spared.

JOHN [*taking her hands tenderly*]. Deborah, there spoke thy mother heart. Dost think that my heart too doth not yearn for our children? I sometimes fear they think me stern and harsh, but thou and I have seen what follows in the train of ease and comfort.

DEBORAH [*after a pause, she speaks hesitatingly*]. It is so far, John, and we have already endured much. Roger at least remembers our evil days. Is it wrong to have a little ease and peace?

JOHN. I wish with all my soul I could say, no, and answer thee with truth. But ease and peace are cankers to the soul. To keep our children here in this land of plenty, where they are aliens, where they can have no duty to the state, and then to look for steadfast souls, is as though we should feed them still on pap and hope for iron muscles. I have talked this matter over with Pastor Robinson and Captain Standish and many others and we are of one mind.

DEBORAH. But these Dutch puritans hold our same faith and would renounce the flesh.

JOHN [*putting his hand gently on her shoulder*]. My sweet wife—alas, this poison is in thy blood as well. Hast

forgot that we are English? [*Pointing to the ivy which droops against the wall.*] The ivy which thou plantedst with such care and used to cherish—thou broughtest it from England I do remember, as a tiny shoot—now lies neglected for these Dutch plants [*He points to the newly covered trench at her feet.*], these tulips. I note with sorrow that our David is more Dutch than English—that I should say that of a lad of mine! Prudence already attracts the youth of Holland. She is an English lass, and she must wed a lad of England, not a foreigner. Roger alone is quite untainted by this air, for he was older when we sought these shores. He never can forget our English lanes and fields. We talk of them often together as fellow exiles should. I know he'll welcome this project if it doth succeed. I have not broached it even to him for I would not have him disappointed if we still must wait. [*As* JOHN *speaks of* ROGER, DEBORAH *suddenly looks thoughtful. She does not reply at once. Then as though shaking off an unpleasant doubt or thought.*]

DEBORAH. What sort of land is this America? Is it indeed so perilous and wild?

JOHN. It is the land for our posterity. There, there is room for all to till their fields as did our fathers. It is not rotten with the love of gain which taints the mind of every Hollander. There we may worship God in spirit and in truth. And best of all we will hear nothing but the English tongue praising His name. A stern bleak land, 'tis true, but it hath all of England's virtues without her bigotry.

DEBORAH. John, thou knowest full well wherever thou dost lead, there will I follow, but I do beg thee act not in great haste.

JOHN. Deborah, night after night when thou wast wrapped in dreams, I've wrestled with the spirit as Jacob did of old. Fear not. Remember we will not begin as we did here, quite empty handed. Roger hath in his strong box my savings of these twelve years. They make no small

amount. The Lord hath prospered us but for this time.

DEBORAH [*she suddenly remembers her talk with* ROGER. *A look of alarm comes over her face. She falters*]. Oh, John—not those—

JOHN [*tenderly he puts his arms about her. He sees her expression but does not understand*]. Let thy mind be at peace. This is not woman's business. I did not tell thee this to trouble thee. Say naught to David, or Prudence or even Roger for the present. It may be we must wait till spring. So many want to make the journey. But I am promised by the captain that he will hold five places for me on the *Speedwell* until to-night. The *Sprite* is due to-day, and she should bring me word from our good cousin. [*He begins to pace up and down again, with his hands behind him.*] Greatly I long to be again on English soil, and 'tis a goodly company that goes. I pray we may go too. My children shall escape these snares and shall be English as their parents are. [*He steps onto the stoop and goes to the door.*] Now must I go to David and discover how goes his task. He greatly needs my guidance. I must be with him more from this time forth. [*He goes in.* DEBORAH *stands a moment watching him disappear then she moves slowly and thoughtfully toward the house and enters the kitchen door. The garden is empty for a moment, then* FRANZ *appears, coming from the left. He peers over the gate, sees the garden is empty, opens the gate and enters. He is a sturdy young Dutch Puritan of about twenty-one or two years of age. He goes to the kitchen door and calls softly.*]

FRANZ. Prudence! Prudence! [PRUDENCE *appears at the door.*]

PRUDENCE. Oh, Franz, thou shouldst not have come now. My father would be very angry—

FRANZ. I had to see thee, sweeting. Just a word. [*He takes her hand and draws her slowly down from the doorway and toward the front of the garden.*] It is so long since I have seen thee—more than twenty hours—and I

feared last evening had been a dream. My little English rose!

PRUDENCE [*drawing away from his embrace*]. Thou must not, Franz. I fear that I can never be thy wife.

FRANZ [*putting his arm tenderly about her shoulder*]. Why not, sweeting? I hate the counting house, but even my father marked my diligence to-day. Why should thy father refuse when I can come to him and say I have a cottage for thee, and some small savings, and two willing hands, and a fond heart that's like to burst for love of thee?

PRUDENCE. Mother saith she fears my father will have no husband for me but a man of England.

FRANZ [*soothingly*]. Thy mother is ever fearful. 'Tis the mother's way. Thy father brought thee to Holland. He must have known when he transplanted so fair a flower to Holland soil some envious Dutchman would desire to pluck it. He left England not for his love of her. [*Suddenly seizing both her hands and speaking impulsively.*] Oh, Prudence, say again what thou didst say last night!

PRUDENCE [*hanging her head, not daring to meet his eye*]. Oh, Franz, I cannot. In the daylight—

FRANZ. Yes, dear. I fain would see the flush come on thy cheek like sun at dawn, when thou wilt say "I love thee." Dost thou not care for me, thy Franz, who loves thee more than all the earth? Confess thy love again, my sweetheart. Say, as thou didst last night, "My Franz, I love thee."

PRUDENCE [*timidly she raises her face to his*]. My Franz! [*She droops her head and murmurs.*] I love thee. [*He takes her face between his hands and is about to kiss her lips when* JOHN *appears on the porch and sees them.*]

JOHN. Prudence! [*The lovers spring apart.*] Franz! My daughter! Wantoning like any wench! Is this thy Holland honor, Franz Huidekoper, to steal behind my back and beguile my daughter with honeyed words?

FRANZ [*coming forward*]. I meant no wrong, Master

Debenham, unless it be wrong to love thy daughter Prudence, and to seek her hand in wedlock.

JOHN [*he comes down from the stoop and approaches the couple*]. Thou wouldst have spared her much sorrow had thou but sought me first. I'll have no foreign suitor for my child. Prudence is English. Her husband, whoe'er he be, must be of her own race. I approve not of mixed blood. Let me hear no more of this. Go seek a Holland lass to be thy wife. Go, Franz! [JOHN *takes* PRUDENCE *in his arms.*] I'll watch my girl with greater care hereafter. [FRANZ, *gazing sorrowfully at* PRUDENCE, *whose face is hidden in her father's breast, goes out.* JOHN *lifts* PRUDENCE'S *face to his. She is weeping.*] My lass. Think not that thy father is hard with thee. Thou art young and tender—a very ewe lamb in thine innocence. These Hollanders look not on life—even those who worship with the Puritans—as do we English. I am old and wise. I have seen the evil that comes of matches ill-advised. It is grievous that thou shouldst suffer for my fault, for 'tis my fault that we have lingered here. I have thought of thee but as a child and not yet ready for thoughts of love. The time will come, when I can tell thee all my plans. Then thou wilt rejoice that I prevented thee from union with one who would tie thee to this place. Thy English heart will counsel thee. [*He kisses her on the forehead.*] No more of this. Go to thy mother, child. She will comfort thee. Forgive thy father who hath caused thee pain.

PRUDENCE [*lifting her eyes submissively to her father*]. Oh, Father, I love him so! But I will try to do thy will.

JOHN. There spoke my girl. Look up. Remember however long the night, joy cometh with the morning. [PRUDENCE *goes slowly into the kitchen.* JOHN *stands a moment in thought. Then the gate clicks and* JAN HUIDEKOPER *enters. He comes from the left. He is a rotund Hollander of about the age of* JOHN, *but of much more sanguine and cheerful temperament.*]

JAN. Good morrow, Master Debenham. I bear a letter for thee brought by good Captain Warren of the *Sprite*. [*He produces the letter and a square box from a pocket.*] He hath also brought me a box of new tobacco, fresh from America. I think thou dost not yet use the weed. I wonder at thee. It is a soothing habit. I am most anxious to try the flavor of this package.

JOHN [*he looks at him with disfavor as* JAN *takes out a long clay pipe and fills it. He takes the letter eagerly.*] How canst thou like the taste of that vile plant? It contains a poison, I have heard on good authority, that numbs the senses and doth dull the mind.

JAN. Nay, thou art wrong, good Master Debenham. It is a pleasant solace after work and soothes the brain and calms the spirit. I must leave thee to beg a coal from Mistress Deborah to make the fire. If indeed thou wilt not smoke, then must I enjoy my pipe alone. [JAN *goes into the kitchen, while* JOHN *eagerly breaks the seal on the letter which he reads, his face showing great exultation as he does so. A moment later* JAN *returns puffing great clouds of smoke.*]

JOHN. Sit down, Meinherr, upon yon bench. This letter brings great news.

JAN. So? What is the news from England? Are the papists near their fall? Hath the king seen the light at last?

JOHN. Nay, it hath naught to do with kings. 'Tis from my cousin, William Leeds, who sends me the good tidings that he hath taken five places for me upon the good ship *Mayflower* which sails within the fortnight for America. He gives me the places of his own kindred. He says: "Their household goods being already in the hold, thou canst buy them, selling thine own in Holland, so wilt thou have ample time to get together thy personal effects and sundry linens." That means we can sail with the *Speedwell* as I hoped. I had feared about our goods.

JAN [*he is astonished at this news*]. What! Thou and

thy family leave our pleasant Holland for bleak America? Thou dost jest, Master Debenham!

JOHN. Meinherr Huidekoper, thou knowest I am not a man who jesteth. This epistle fixes me in my intention to sail for that new land. I waited for this letter instead of shipping for the voyage, as many have, upon the *Speedwell*, which is in my opinion unseaworthy for so long a journey.

JAN. This is astounding news and grieves my heart. I scarcely now can credit mine own ears. Hast thou well considered? It seems to me a hasty move. Here thou hast comfort, thou and thy wife and children. In that bleak land with its forbidding coast of which I've often heard, what wilt thou have thou hast not here? Think of thy children! They will of necessity lack many things our land doth give them.

JOHN. I think of them, and that is why I go. Thou askest what I'll have in that far land? I will have fields to till, fields of my own as had my fathers, fields which are too dear here for my possessing. My children will breathe English air. They will hear ever the English tongue which is their own. Jan Huidekoper, thou and thy countrymen have given us shelter for twelve long years. We have labored humbly amongst you, worshiping our Maker by the dictates of our hearts. But this is not our home, nor never can be home to men of England! Our children become soft amidst these comforts. They think more of the gain of gold than their soul's health. Their very speech takes on the accent of thy Holland tongue. I mean no discourtesy. We are thankful for thy shelter, but we have ever been but sojourners here on thy shores. In that far country we will found a new England of our own. We will be under England's rule, but far from her oppression. I go not empty handed. My years of toil have brought me some small savings. My sons are stalwart lads. Deborah and Prudence are strong and well. Together we will help subdue this barren land to make it England, a free England, to the glory of God and for our posterity.

JAN [*shaking his head musingly*]. A strange people, you English! Fearful ever of comfort. Dreading ease and happiness for yourselves and for your offspring. Now we Dutch are hardy mariners, seeking strange lands for trade and barter, a thrifty folk at home, ever careful for the future—but we enjoy the fruits our toil doth bring. I like my Franz's merry laugh. He cares not greatly for the counting house, but he is young, and youth finds ever the yoke of duty irksome. I think a little sunshine in his life doth him no harm. Thou, and thy Puritan English, look always for the devil's mark on pleasure and hear the patter of his hoof in merriment.

JOHN [*seriously*]. Meinherr—that is because of our upbringing and the experiences which lie behind us. When one's house hath been daily searched by soldiery, when one hath lain in prison for one's faith; when one hath seen mummers and loose livers triumph, and one's neighbors living with no thought of that dread hereafter when men shall be required to give account of their stewardship, a man can have no love of merriment. Thy lines have ever lain in pleasant places, but such men as I do see this world but as a vale of tears, and know that naught but serious thought and constant prayer can bring the good therefrom.

JAN [*rising, and smiling good-humoredly*]. Well, thou and thine must take life in thine own grim way. But I greatly regret thy decision to leave our land. Thy firm example hath brought many stragglers to the true faith and fear of God. I pray that thy good influence will not depart with thee. [*Examining his pipe ruefully.*] This pipe is stopped. Something is in the stem. But I like much the flavor of this new tobacco. I must go on. I shall see thee again before thou goest aboard the boat. All Leyden will be at the embarkation. Let me know if I can do thee service, or any business thou mayest leave behind.

JOHN. Thank thee, my friend. I'll not forget thine offer. Farewell then for the present.

JAN. Farewell. [JAN *goes out, turning to the right.*

DEBORAH *comes to the kitchen door looking anxiously at the letter which* JOHN *holds in his hand.*]

DEBORAH [*fearfully*]. What news, John?

JOHN. Great news. Call Prudence. David! [*At the calls,* PRUDENCE *appears at the kitchen door, while* DAVID, *book in hand, comes onto the stoop.*] My children, we sail with the others upon the *Speedwell* for England. Thence by the good ship *Mayflower* to that land of promise, America.

PRUDENCE [*shrinking toward her mother in dismay*]. To America? Oh, my Father! Not all of us! To live—forever?

DAVID. We're going on the *Speedwell?* Hurray! To America? I heard Pastor Robinson tell of the wild beasts there that one may hunt—and Indians—Redskins, they call them. I shall take the sword which was my grandsire's, and his fowling piece. Thou wilt let me drill to be a soldier under Captain Standish, wilt thou not, Father?

JOHN [*pleased at* DAVID'S *attitude*]. It will be good for thee to learn the use of weapons of defense. But it is that thy spirit may be armed and armored that we go.

DEBORAH [*fearfully*]. Thou hast not yet consulted Roger, John. He may advise—

JOHN. Roger? Advise? He will advise as always that which I do counsel. Roger hath seen the dangers of this land. He is wise, and he is all an Englishman. I know he hath seen the perils here even as I have seen them. Fear not for Roger, wife.

DEBORAH. But our household goods? Can we get them so soon on board? Is there yet room? And time?

JOHN [*looking curiously at her*]. What ails thee, Deborah? It is not like thee to seek for obstacles. [*He hands her the letter.*] Here, see by this letter how that lion hath been brushed from our path. The hand of the Lord is in this. We need but dispose of our household furniture here in Leyden, taking our attire and linens with us. I thank that God of our fathers who hath led us to the threshold

of this promised land. There will we once again be free men of a new England. [DEBORAH *after reading the letter hands it back to* JOHN.]

PRUDENCE [*timidly*]. It is so far, my Father.

JOHN [*tenderly*]. My daughter, fear not. It is not far from God. I'll warrant thou wilt find it nearer Him. And we will all be there together. [*He puts his arm about* PRUDENCE.] Trust Him who hath brought us out of tribulation. Thy father knoweth it is well for thee to go. [*He turns to* DAVID, *handing him a purse.*] David, make haste and seek out the captain of the *Speedwell*. Tell him I will take those five places I engaged. Here is my wallet. I have paid him earnest money, and within is enough and more to suffice for the remainder. [DAVID *gleefully starts out of the gate where he almost collides with* ROGER, *who is returning.*]

ROGER [*sternly*]. Have a care, boy. Good evening, Father. I bring thee news, great news of cheer.

JOHN [*smiling with pride at* ROGER]. I too have news, but first we will hear thine. What is it, son?

ROGER. Meinherr Schmidt hath promised me five hundred guldens more a year, and every year hereafter if I do well he will increase my stipend until I come at last to have a share in his concerns. That means for thine old age there'll be no care—we shall be able to have many more comforts, we can increase our gifts unto the Lord—

JOHN [*interrupting*]. My boy, I am well pleased that Meinherr Schmidt should recognize thy worth, but I have greater news for thee, so great in sooth, it makes thy news quite needless. While this right arm hath strength I shall not need to think of mine old age. Rejoice, my son, we rest no longer here on foreign soil. America, that land of which we have so often spoken, is to be our home. We sail upon the *Speedwell*—nay—start not. I know she is not safe for so long a voyage, but I have arranged our passage from England upon the *Mayflower*, a much larger vessel. The time is short, but all hath been arranged. The money

that thou hast in thy strong box is ample for our needs. [ROGER *starts, and is uneasy but* JOHN *does not notice it.*] We three men, for David is near the stature of a man, can build our dwelling and can till the fields. We shall be Englishmen on English soil, the soil of a new England. And we shall worship God according to our consciences, making our spirits fit for Him at last.

ROGER [*evidently much disturbed, seeking an excuse*]. But, Father—is this wise? We are established here. With this increase I shall earn as much as many men now twice mine age. In that far land we must begin again.

JOHN [*hardly believing his ears*]. Roger! Thou too! Art thou too tainted by these flesh pots? What is thy paltry pittance to the welfare of thy soul? It is the mammon of unrighteousness that speaketh with thy tongue. I feared for David for he is young, and Prudence and thy mother have but the common weakness of their sex in shrinking from the hardships which men face without flinching. But thou—I felt that thou, my first born, wert ever steadfast mid this comfortable world. If thou art warped, 'tis time that we were off. Close up thine affairs. Bring me my strong box with my hoarded gold, and within the year I'll warrant thou wilt blush that for one moment thou didst forget that thy soul's health requireth sacrifice of ease of body.

ROGER. Father—wait—I must explain. Thou canst not go—not now.

JOHN [*with surprise and indignation*]. Who says I cannot go?

ROGER. I say so, Father. Hear me, and do not judge too harshly. Thou gavest me thy savings as in Holy Writ the Lord gave talents to his servants. I would not wrap thy talent in a napkin. I would return it thee tenfold. Herr Schmidt heard of a venture whereby certain Indian stuffs might be bought cheaply and then brought here to reap tenfold and more upon the price. I took thy savings and bought rich silks as others did, Meinherr Schmidt

among them. The venture did not prosper. The vessel and her cargo were all wrecked upon the treacherous Goodwins. The word was brought this day by a survivor. It is—

JOHN [*interrupting, horrified*]. Thou hast gambled with my savings! My little hoard did but serve to make thee covetous! My sin be on mine head for having forgotten my Lord's command to lay no treasures up on earth!

ROGER. It was no gamble, Father, thou dost not understand. It was a business venture. I will repay it all again with usury in time. That was one reason that I so rejoiced now I am to earn more. It was not for my gain I did the thing. Within the twelvemonth I shall have replaced the greater portion.

JOHN. This avarice hath been gnawing at thy heart the while I prayed and hoped for better things. Always I told myself thou didst see with me eye to eye. I was deceived. So be it. My savings are all gone. 'Tis well, for they can tempt no more to sin. I still have money that can pay our passage. I still have two strong arms and a stout heart. Thou hast failed in thy trust, but in that land we seek thou'lt expiate thy sin. [ROGER *stands a moment with head bowed, while* DEBORAH *and* PRUDENCE *watch him anxiously. He then raises his head and speaks almost defiantly.*]

ROGER. I can not go to America, Father. I must stay and earn the gold to pay thee back thy loss.

JOHN. Speak not of *my* loss. What is the loss of gold compared to thy warped soul which thinks of money only! God grant that in America thine eyes may be opened which now are blind with gold. May thy soul come there to its full stature. We will sail upon the *Speedwell.* Thou hast one day to settle thy affairs.

ROGER [*he hesitates a moment, then says stubbornly*]. I will not sail, my Father.

JOHN [*he has started to go into the house, thinking the matter ended. He turns suddenly on* ROGER, *not believing his ears.*]. What dost thou say? Thou wilt *not* sail?

ROGER. I have said it. Why should I go to a bleak

foreign land when I am well established here in Leyden? Thou hast no reason. I offer thee to give thy money back. I offered thee to help thee in thine age. I am full grown. I will not leave here at thy bidding.

JOHN. And thou wouldst stay in ease and luxury among the flesh pots of this land of Holland while we go forth to claim the promised land? For the last time I bid thee come with us.

DEBORAH [*all this time she has been listening to the dialogue in great distress of soul.*] Roger, my son, this is the way of peace and righteousness. I pray thee do thy father's bidding.

ROGER. Mother, I can not. He brought me here among these Hollanders. He bade me labor amongst them. Well, I have done so, and I like them and their ways. I have worked hard and now I am established and earn a goodly wage. They are a godly people. Why should I run from them, throwing away all I have gained for this my father's sudden whim?

DEBORAH. Oh, my son, these are the things that perish—

JOHN [*interrupting*]. Peace, Deborah. "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone." [*To* ROGER.] As for thee, go thy ways among these Hollanders. Seek thy gold as money grubbers do, but send me none. I wish no payment back. From this time forth thou art no son of mine. Go! [JOHN *points to the gate.* DEBORAH *starts forward as though to stop* ROGER. PRUDENCE *shrinks toward her mother, but* ROGER *stalks out with no look in their direction. He turns to the right, encountering* DAVID, *who enters joyfully.*]

DAVID. Roger, we're going on the *Speedwell*— [*As* ROGER *disappears, making no reply,* DAVID *looks at the group and realizing something is wrong comes quietly to his father.*] I met the captain, Father, on his way hither, and told him we would go, and paid him the passage money. He saith he hath been besieged for places these past few days. [JOHN *stands sternly looking ahead of him. He hardly*

hears what DAVID *says. He is evidently trying to adjust himself to the shock he has just received.* DEBORAH *stands watching him with pity for his shock, and in agony of mind that her first born is to be separated from them.* PRUDENCE *droops sadly. Just then* JAN *and* FRANZ *enter from right through the gate.* JAN *is plainly indignant and excited.* FRANZ *seems reluctant although there is a light of hope in his eye.* PRUDENCE *brightens at sight of him.* JAN *comes directly down to the front and faces* JOHN.]

JAN. Master Debenham, I would have speech with thee. Nay—[*As* PRUDENCE *and* DEBORAH *are about to withdraw.*] go not. It doth concern thee both as well. My Franz hath confided in me that he loves thy daughter, Master Debenham, but that thou dost not favor his suit because he is not of thy race. The Dutch are proud of their descent as the cold English and would ask favors of no man. But when Franz learned of thy proposed departure he told me of his suit and thy reply. I bent my pride to come to thee and ask thee to again consider. I will give Franz his portion so he may wed the maid at once with thy consent. Canst thou not leave her in Holland as hostage to thy neighbors? Where wilt thou find a better lad than my Franz here to be her mate?

JOHN. Meinherr Huidekoper, I greatly honor thee. I like thy Franz. I meant no insult to thy race and country, to whom I feel we owe a debt we never can repay. So have I often spoken. But when Franz said he sought my girl in wedlock, I knew within my heart my God was showing me the promised land to which we go. My plans were made. I thought to take my children with me. I know that they will flourish better in other soil. [*He hesitates. He is still shaken by* ROGER'S *defection.*] Now—I—I know not what to say. [*He turns to* PRUDENCE. *He is still master, but there is a pleading note in his voice.*] Prudence, what saith thy conscience? Wilt thou too desert thy parents?

PRUDENCE [*involuntarily she extends her arms toward*

FRANZ, *a movement which he notes, but not his father. Then she sadly withdraws and comes close to her father, though looking and speaking to* FRANZ]. Franz—I must obey. [*She turns to her father, extending her arms.*] Oh, Father—thou knowest, I will follow thee.

JOHN [*proudly putting his arm about his daughter*]. There, Meinherr Huidekoper, thou hast thine answer.

JAN [*he puts his hand on* FRANZ'S *shoulder*]. Well, my lad. Many a Holland lass doth smile on thee, and I too shall be better content for thee to mate with thine own race.

JOHN. We sail for that new England, and Prudence sails with us. I have taken five passages—[*Suddenly remembering, he murmurs.*] though I shall not need five.

FRANZ [*he has had eyes only for* PRUDENCE *and her father. He starts forward at* JOHN'S *last words.*] Not need five! Who stays behind, Master Debenham? Thy wife, thy daughter, two sons and thyself. 'Tis five.

JOHN [*significantly*]. I have but *one* son: David. [*There is a silence.* DEBORAH *starts forward as though she would make him retract the words, then she draws back, covering her face with her hands. The real meaning of his words slowly come to* JAN *and* FRANZ. *As the latter realizes what is meant, he steps impetuously forward.*]

FRANZ [*speaking first to his father, then turning to* JOHN]. My father—Master Debenham—wilt thou permit that I should make the five? My hands are strong. My heart is still with Prudence. I love not the counting house. I, too, would see the new world where stout hearts and strong arms count. I prithee let me go.

JAN. My son! Thou wouldst not go. Where is thy pride? The girl hath made her choice.

FRANZ [*with an exultant note in his voice*]. She only did not choose to stay in Holland. Master Debenham, thou wouldst have thy daughter marry one of her own and, on that far shore, America, we shall be all one nation. We shall no longer be Dutch and English but Americans.

Then, Master Debenham, I shall be no alien to Prudence.

JOHN [*after a pause, reluctant admiration showing in his face*]. I will take thee if thy father doth consent. But as to Prudence—well—I make no promises. [FRANZ *and* PRUDENCE *smile at one another as if content to wait the outcome.* JAN *shows his distress. He speaks pleadingly.*]

JAN. My Franz! Doth the Lord ask this sacrifice of me? [*Seeing the expression on* FRANZ'S *face that it is hopeless to move him.*] I know thou art not for the counting house. Youth goeth ever after love and longeth for strange countries. Alas! I do recall so was I at thine age. [*Turning to* JOHN, *he speaks in a voice full of tenderness for his son.*] Master Debenham, watch after my boy. This love hath made him clay within thy hands, but were he iron thou hast the lode stone.

JOHN. Fear not for him. 'Twill be for his soul's health, Meinherr. I think we do a greater thing than we do know. I feel like Moses when he gazed from Pisgah's top. It is the promised land to which we go. The promised land beckoning to all mankind. I feel this little band will be the rock on which will rise the pillars of a temple which shall give shelter to men of all the earth. I see them come from many nations and from many climes, seeking that freedom of the spirit in which alone is life. Speaking the English tongue, governed by justice, there shall rise a mighty nation founded on the liberty of conscience and trust in God Almighty. Under the shadow of His wings shall we dwell in peace and safety. [*As he stands there like a seer* FRANZ *and* DAVID *listen to him spellbound. As he finishes* JAN *draws near* DEBORAH *in response to a look from her.*]

DEBORAH [*grasping his hand in both her own*]. Thy boy is safe, but send me word of mine—my Roger.

JAN. I understand. Thou shalt have news, I promise. [*He turns to* FRANZ.] Come, lad, there is much to be done if thou wouldst take thy place upon the *Speedwell.* We must make haste. [FRANZ *gives a tender look at* PRUDENCE,

who is smiling at him. He and his father go out, turning to the right.]

DEBORAH [*she motions to* DAVID *and* PRUDENCE *to go within. They enter the kitchen.* JOHN *has sunk upon a bench, the open letter in his hand. He is still looking into the future.*] John, thou knowest thy ways are always my ways and thy God is my God. But thou wilt not forbid me to seek out Roger and bid him farewell?

JOHN [*he takes her hand but does not look at her*]. My wife—do as thy conscience dictates. [*A smile lights her face and impulsively, as if in gratitude, she kisses him lightly on his hair. She then goes slowly toward the door of the kitchen, pausing a moment before she enters to look tenderly at him. She knows and pities the sorrow of his stern heart. As she stands there he bows his head in his hands and murmurs:* Roger! My son! DEBORAH *sighs as she enters the house. He crumples the letter in his agony, which seems to recall the missive to his mind. He smooths it out and starts to walk slowly up and down. Then he pauses and once more gazes out as though he saw the vision of the new world.* The vision! The vision! "Where there is no vision, the people perish!"

[CURTAIN]

FOREFATHERS' DAY

AT THE TURN OF TIDE *

By

GEORGIA STENGER

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CHARACTERS

PATIENCE (called Patty by her friends): bright-faced, vivacious, of decided expression.

SILENCE, *her chum*: a fine-looking girl of sixteen; talkative, cheery.

RESTORE AND RETURN, *the twins:* happy, excitable, enthusiastic.

INCREASE } *young Puritan lads of sixteen and eighteen*
EMANUEL } *years.*

MRS. BREWSTER, *mother of the colony,* wife of Elder Brewster.

MRS. BRADFORD, *wife of the governor of the colony:* optimistic, hopeful, firm.

MRS. WINSLOW (*once Widow White*): sweet, winsome, delicate.

ELDER BREWSTER, *spiritual head of the colony.*

GOVERNOR BRADFORD, *legal head of the colony.*

MYLES STANDISH, *leader of the colonial soldiery:* a tall, big man, gruff and bold.

JOHN ALDEN (in charge during Standish's absence), *a young man of twenty-five.*

WILL LOWE, *a colonist.*

TISQUANTUM (called Squanto), *an Indian serving the Pilgrims.*

WRESTLING BREWSTER, *five years old, son of Elder Brewster.*

MASSASOIT, *sachem of the Wampanoags.*

INDIAN WOMAN, *wife of Massasoit.*

PURITANS, INDIANS, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, *ad libitum.*

AT THE TURN OF TIDE

Act I: November tenth. The Common House of the Puritan Colonists.
Act II: Forefathers' Day, December twenty-first. The same.
Act III: Christmas Day. The same.

ACT I

The living room of the Common House. PATIENCE *is discovered, right-center, sitting by the cradle of* PEREGRINE WHITE. *She is in deep thought, chin on hand, elbow on knee. Now and then she rocks the cradle gently. Continue this atmosphere of reflection for a full minute. Voices are heard outside the closed door.* PATIENCE *looks up.*

MRS. WINSLOW [*without the door*]. Patience! Patience! [PATIENCE *rises, tiptoes to the door, unbolts and opens it, holding her finger to her lip as* MRS. WINSLOW *enters.*]

MRS. WINSLOW. Dear child, thy mother needs thee. How kind thou art to help me through these long hours since noon-meat. The *Charity* sails at dawn to-morrow, the Captain says, and there is overmuch to do before this evening's lecture. Patience, thy mother's heart is very sad, with thy father gone, and the ship carrying back the doleful news to his folk in England. So haste and comfort her. [PATIENCE *wipes her eyes on her apron and goes out, shutting the door.* MRS. WINSLOW *removes her wraps and head shawl. This discovers a sweet, motherly face and buxom form. Her features are worn, however. She arranges a*

few things about the room, draws the curtain, pokes the fire, then takes a sewing-basket off the high-boy, and sits by the cradle. She stoops over the baby and kisses its hand.

MRS. WINSLOW. My baby Peregrine! The ship goes back to-morrow to thy mother's land—dear England—and we cannot go with it. Oh! to be in England this blessed Christmastide! To hear the Christmas church-bells ringing, to help bring in the Yule log and to load the oaken board with goodly fare; to light Christmas candles and to listen to the masquers singing carols on Christmas Eve! [*She bends over the cradle, crying softly.*] And after winter, spring;—to watch flowers open, to roam fields smelling sweet of herbs and wild things, to see all around prosperity and plentiful harvest. But we must stay, my little babe, in this bleak, barren wilderness where every strange sound fills our hearts with fear, always in dread of that silent, hidden enemy who little knows how many of our number are sleeping yonder in that hillside resting-place of death. [*Enter, from an inner door, right,* MRS. BRADFORD. *She comes behind* MRS. WINSLOW *and lays a hand on her shoulder.* MRS. WINSLOW *looks up quickly, and wipes her eyes.*]

MRS. BRADFORD. What aileth thee, Susannah? Art thou sick, too?

MRS. WINSLOW. Nay, nay, Alice, just feeling tired; yea, and sleepy. I watched by the bed of Christopher Martin's wife until near dawn. I am tired and mayhap a little irritable too, which prayer will take away.

MRS. BRADFORD. You are in need of rest, Susannah, not prayer. Go take a short walk while the sunset glows.

MRS. WINSLOW. I should see only the graves on Burial Hill, and the *Charity* riding at anchor in the cove, and my heart would nearly break.

MRS. BRADFORD. I see that thou art mourning; thou art resisting the grace of Providence, Susannah. Thou hast been marked by favor with thy baby, Peregrine, who is a comfort in this land, more than you know.

MRS. WINSLOW. But there are so many trials and fears. Anything might happen; my babe might be stolen. [*The upper half of the rear door opens, and* MYLES STANDISH *appears.*]

STANDISH [*coming to left side of stage*]. Hoity-toity! Who talks of stolen babies? Mrs. Winslow, you shall be put into a ducking-stool for a traitor. [*He laughs.*] Peregrine has been sent here for a purpose.

MRS. WINSLOW. Heaven grant that purpose be not in this land of distress then, where we are afraid to weep over our dead, and cannot go to hear the blessed gospel preached without sword and blunderbuss beside us and behind us! This is a strange altar.

STANDISH [*soberly*]. But not a strange God, Mistress Winslow.

MRS. BRADFORD. Mayhap Peregrine is here, Myles Standish, to show you what a Plymouth woman can do; what works she can shape; what misfortunes she can withstand; what services she can render; what—

STANDISH [*putting his hands over his ears*]. Enow, enow! Thy tongue goes like a bell clapper. You women should wear bridles. Come down to the beach with me and aid in sewing up the sacks of sassafras and dye barks we are sending to Old England to show what a New England can produce worthy of their mighty consideration.

MRS. WINSLOW. But the baby—

MRS. BRADFORD. Call Patience. [*She goes to the outer door, the upper half of which is still open.*] There she is now, talking to Silence.

STANDISH. Rather say that Silence is talking to Patience, for it takes Patience to listen to that rattlebrain, Silence, who is falsely so-called. [*Laughing, he opens the lower half-door and exits.* MRS. BRADFORD *stops at the door to speak to* PATIENCE *and* SILENCE, *who enter.*]

MRS. WINSLOW. Watch Peregrine, Patty. I am fearful of leaving her with any one but you. It is scarce twilight and we go to help the men. [*The two women go out.*]

SILENCE. I think Mistress Winslow feels overly anxious. Mayhap because this is so sickly a year. Think so, Patty? And then, too, it is lecture night—and that makes me anxious myself. [*She shrugs her shoulders and laughs.*]

PATIENCE. O Silence, do talk of something cheerful. Did you know that the *Fortune* is coming, and is bringing some real brides? Oh-h, what good times we shall have looking at their finery! Perhaps Elder Brewster will hold up a bit and we be less prayerful now and then.

SILENCE [*sitting on the big table and swinging her feet*]. I wish I could go back in that ship—I'd be a bride myself in three or four years. Father says I can go back next year and stay for my finishing off. Then the parties, slippers with silver buckles [*jumping down from the table and dancing around*], mistletoe to be kissed under, rides and jolly times! And the Yule log at Christmas and the bringing in of the boar's head by the handsomest man. [*Laughs.*] But you, you back here will be feasting—I should say, fasting—on samp and pumpkin sauce with a fine top-off of furmity. [*She spreads her skirts and curtseys coyly.*]

PATIENCE. Nay, you mistake, Miss Saucebox. We will be planning a new and great city, with rejoicings of prosperity and cheer. Our women will be sitting in the councils and advising the men. [*Drawing a long face.*] We may undergo sacrifices and endure hardships, but we will be remembered unto the third and fourth generations. [*Counting on her fingers.*] A greater crown of reward will come to us in this western land than to any ease-loving dame and maid who spend their time building their hair and painting their faces. How small thee will look then! [*She looks scornfully at* SILENCE. *The door opens and the girls start. Enter the twins,* RESTORE *and* RETURN, *one holding by the hand the young child,* WRESTLING BREWSTER.]

RESTORE [*breathlessly, as if from running*]. O Patty, father says that—that the Governor says that we cannot

have—have any Christmas—any rejoicings—any—any—think of that!

RETURN [*nodding her head with emphasis*]. Think o-of—last Christmas.

SILENCE [*shuddering*]. Oh, don't!

PATIENCE. You wait, girls, you wait. [*She nods knowingly.*] Wear patience in your hearts. We will have good cheer here; yea, as any that England or Holland can supply. We can't have mistletoe. [*Muses.*] But we have spruces—beautiful ones.

WRESTLING. Can we have a tree, Patty?

PATIENCE. Yes, indeed, one as high as this house. [WRESTLING *looks up and all around the room.*]

SILENCE. But a Yule log, Miss Pert.

PATIENCE. Ho, ho! The woods are full of them—and holly too.

RESTORE [*who, with* RETURN, *clasps hands in admiration of* PATIENCE]. And a real boar's head, Patty, and a handsome man?

PATIENCE. O girls, hush! You want so much. Yes, yes, to everything. And why not? Are we not finding many things? Already we are sending back to the old country dyes and maize and furs—things they never heard of, maybe. Oh, I tell you, we are ancestors over here; we are founders; we are makers and finders. Some day the Old World will be coming over here to make merry at Christmastide. Then they will marvel much. [*The girls take work from the bags on their arms and settle to sewing.*]

RETURN. Father says the pastor will frown upon our games.

RESTORE. And that the Indians will come upon us while we are gaming—for our sins, you know. [*Confusion and scraping are heard at the door. The girls scream. The baby appears to waken;* PATIENCE *grasps her and runs into the inner room. The girls and* WRESTLING *hide in fear under the table. Enter* EMANUEL *and* INCREASE, *stamping their feet and looking about.*]

INCREASE. Hie! Hie! Patty, where art thou? [*The girls come from their hiding-place.* PATIENCE *hurries from the inner room without the baby.*]

SILENCE. O lads, you did give us such a start! My heart is still beating. We thought it was Indians.

WRESTLING [*coming suddenly from under the table*]. Injuns! Injuns!

PATIENCE [*grasping* WRESTLING *and shaking him*]. Hush, you'll wake the baby. [*To the lads, severely.*] Why are you not along with the men at the shore, helping load the ship?

EMANUEL. Hie, Patty, I fain would be here with you—or, any of the girls for that matter. [*He tries to take her hand.*]

PATIENCE. Yea, after somewhat to eat, no doubt. Well, here is the cupboard; see? [*She opens it.*] Not one bite left for a ne'er-do-well. Oh, yes, I see a bit of cold hasty-pudding. Want it? [INCREASE *and* EMANUEL *have come over, left, to the cupboard in anticipation. They make a grimace, holding their noses.*]

SILENCE [*giggling*]. You will be glad ere the winter is over to have a taste of that same pudding. [INCREASE *chases* SILENCE *around the long table, almost pulling off its cover.*]

PATIENCE [*pulling the cover straight*]. Increase! Silence! See what you are doing. Come, Increase, you have not told us yet why you are not down at the landing.

INCREASE. To tell the truth, Patty, the Elder sent us home because he found us playing stool-ball on the highway instead of working on the new High Street. He threatened us with the stocks—

WRESTLING [*wailing*]. I want to see Creasy in the stocks, Patience.

INCREASE. Then, here we go! [*He grabs* WRESTLING *and starts to carry him out.* WRESTLING *cries, and all laugh.*]

EMANUEL. What are you lovely damsels going to give us for a Christmas gift?

RESTORE [*primly*]. The good Elder says, "No Christmas." We must spend the day in work, and you know what that means: spinning, knitting, scrubbing and grinding and sewing rags, and— [*Each time she says "and" she puts her tongue out.*]

INCREASE. Why cannot we go and get some greens from the woods—holly and berries?

PATIENCE [*sharply*]. Why cannot you go eight or ten miles and bring us something more than we can pick up ourselves almost at the doorstep? We want something grand and fine—grander and finer than anything ever seen before—something to make up for our being deprived of a boar's head, and mistletoe, and lights, and bonny sweetmeats and carols and dancing— [EMANUEL *starts singing an old carol, beating time. The girls join in one by one, then get up and bow and mince in parts of a country dance. The boys join. The boys get their arms about the girls now and then, and get their ears boxed for it. The girls act very coquettishly.* WRESTLING *gets in the way continually. The upper half of the door opens softly, revealing above the closed portion,* ELDER BREWSTER, MYLES STANDISH *and* GOVERNOR BRADFORD. *They survey the lively scene one full minute, unnoticed by the young people. As they push open the lower half of the door to enter, the girls and boys turn and stand appalled.*]

BREWSTER. My children! My children! This levity is far from becoming. Rather should ye be at prayer for the safety of that little vessel, laden with our hopes, that goes forth on the stormy seas to bear greetings to the friends afar, who think we are praising and singing psalms. Instead, Satan has been tempting ye from the paths of virtue. [*A pause. All take an attitude of contrition, with averted heads.* SILENCE *peeps from under her brows once and catches* INCREASE *doing the same.*]

BRADFORD [*coming to center-front*]. Have you anything to say, Emanuel? [EMANUEL *shakes his head.*] Have you anything to say in defense, Increase? [INCREASE *shakes his head.*] Then I declare you both under the law. [*Very soberly and distinctly.*] You have been found disobedient in refusing punishment when playing on the highway, and now are wanting in respect to your pastor, your Governor and your commonwealth. You must both be— [BRADFORD *pauses and speaks in low tones to* BREWSTER, *who appears to object, then slowly assents. The girls, except* PATIENCE, *apparently want to cry. The lads watch the progress of the argument.*] You are banished from the colony for the term of forty days, from this day, November tenth, which had been set apart as one of prayer, silence and seemly conduct. You are banished for forty days, that you may learn to fast and suffer, be tempted and tried, and so pass through a test befitting your guilt. [*The girls gather round the two lads, comforting them.* PATIENCE *quietly crosses to* STANDISH *and catches his arm. She whispers to him.*]

STANDISH. Why not send these lads with me on that expedition across the bay, for the searching of those white men, which rumor has carried to us in past days?

BRADFORD. That is like your sober sense, friend Myles. It shows the greatness of your kindness, too, to take in hand such idle boys—a disgrace to the colony. [*To the boys.*] You are consigned, then, to our general's keeping. Be ready to leave to-morrow on this exploring enterprise. On no terms whatsoever are you to show your faces until the forty days have passed in fasting and atonement for this breach of conduct and disrespect for your elders. You are fortunate, indeed, that you are not strung to the town tree. [*The boys seem relieved, but still abashed.* EMANUEL *slyly winks at* PATIENCE, *who draws near to him and presses his hand.*]

PATIENCE. O Elder Brewster, will you let the Governor do this? What have we done save innocently enjoy the

life we love? Spare the boys. We girls were the cause of it.

BRADFORD [*shaking his head violently*]. You girls, like women from the days of Eve, are at fault, eh? Yea, Adam said, "The woman did tempt me." Your punishment will be lighter, but none the less a punishment. You damsels must attend every Thursday lecture, standing for three hours in prayerful attitude, soberly and dumb. You must be sable-cloaked and sable-gloved. You are forbidden to wear any silk, don any ribbon, or any tawdry ware on hair or neck; no ruff, no embroidery, for the same period—forty days. Besides this, I must tell the good Mother Brewster that she see you knit six pairs of woolen hose, each of ye, for our soldiers, and—and, that you read the Book of Isaiah through once weekly. [*He pauses, out of breath.*] And beside—

SILENCE [*running to* BRADFORD, *hands over her ears*]. O dear Governor, enow, enow, we beseech thee! We have the weight of too much punishment already, and those words are so hard I get them all tangled up—

PATIENCE [*sharply*]. Hsh-sh-sh, Silence. [*Turns to* STANDISH]. Can't you speak for us girls, too? [STANDISH *shakes his head.*]

BRADFORD [*ignoring the interruption*]. And, besides, you are condemned to cut off your hair and thus take away some of the temptation which leads others into such work as done this night.

RESTORE AND RETURN. Oh! Oh! Oh! [*They sit down on the floor rocking and weeping.* STANDISH *shakes his head as he goes out slowly, pushing the lads before him.* SILENCE *waves her hand to them.* BREWSTER *raises his hands to heaven.*]

PATIENCE. I—I—I— [*Her head droops slowly, and she sinks to the floor.*]

[CURTAIN]

ACT II

Scene: Same as Act I.
Time: December 21.

The rise of the curtain reveals PATIENCE *cleaning out the cupboard and arranging dishes on the shelves; the twins soberly knitting;* SILENCE *sewing carpet rags.* MRS. WINSLOW, *by the cradle, is rocking it and humming a lullaby.* WRESTLING *plays or moves from one to the other.*]

SILENCE [*seeing* MRS. WINSLOW *sigh and lean back*]. Come, dear friend, go into the inner room and lie down for rest. There are many of us here to do what is needed. We four great girls can do it speedily.

MRS. WINSLOW. The men will be in soon, for they are to have a Council meeting and the room must be ready.

RESTORE [*glad to put down her knitting*]. I'll get the great board in readiness, and spread forth our handsome cloth for it. [*While* RESTORE *takes the cloth from a drawer and busies herself with the table,* WRESTLING *slyly takes her knitting and unwinds it.* RETURN *sees him and cuffs his ears. He runs whimpering to* MRS. WINSLOW, *who is being led gently from the room by* PATIENCE *and* SILENCE, *left. The girls come back and group themselves, center-front.*]

SILENCE [*whispering*]. Squanto says not one sign of the boys, and the forty days are long up. Suppose they be drowned in this high sea! Our little dog, left out last night, Patty, was stiff and dead this morning. Suppose they be imperiled by the ice, or now covered with the snow, or—

PATIENCE [*dolefully*]. Or worse yet, suppose they have naught to eat, and are—struggling with death itself. [RETURN *throws down her knitting and joins the group, center-front. The girls take various positions of despair in front of the great table.*]

RETURN. Oh, we have been bad, bad girls to dance and revel when we should have been praying. Is this a dispensation, Patty?

PATIENCE. Whatever it is, let us hope for the best. Squanto cannot see across these blinding seas, nor hear from the deeps of those marshy hollows out in the bay. Be sure he stays near the great fire, and wanders not far from maize-pudding.

SILENCE. Oh, I know this winter will be another terrible, terrible one!

PATIENCE [*looking towards the inner door*]. Silence, be thou still. Thou wert falsely named indeed. Cease chattering. Thou shouldst be glad to have a head of hair to boast of, since Mistress Bradford was good enough to take the sharpness of the Governor's anger away. [SILENCE *pulls out a curl from her cap and winds it around her finger with satisfaction. A faint boom is heard off stage. The girls start—then laugh.*

RESTORE. It is the sunset gun; we must run to the other house. When you see Squanto, Patty, tell him I will give him some bright beads to bring us news of the boys. Good night, good night. [*The three girls go out, leaving* PATIENCE *alone.*]

PATIENCE. I must see how Mistress Winslow is. I hope Wrestling is asleep. [*She goes into the inner room, coming out immediately, shaking her head as she sits down to knit.*] How that blast shakes the house! By divine kindness we are good and warm, but those folk on the sea—[*Shuddering.*] and—and—our friends. Have we been bad? [*Musingly.*] And for that must *they* suffer? [*The door opens slowly, then closes; opens again, and* SQUANTO *comes in, pulling an* INDIAN WOMAN *after him. The woman has a papoose in her arms. As the door closes,* PATIENCE *turns and jumps up.*]

PATIENCE. Squanto, Squanto, what do you mean? Who is this? You must—you must take her away.

SQUANTO. Sick papoose; see? [*He takes the strapped bundle and uncovers the head of the baby, showing a*

bloody rag about it.] Fever? No, no. Squatch? No, no. Cut by Pequod's arrow [*Making gesture of arrow flying past.*]—so. [*He gently opens the bundle,* PATIENCE *trying to restrain him. She shakes her head and points to the door. The woman kneels, watching them, and pulls at* PATIENCE'S *dress, mumbling as she does so.*]

PATIENCE [*tenderly*]. This is a bad wound—poor little baby. May be from a poisoned arrow, Squanto? [SQUANTO *nods and nods.* PATIENCE *hesitates, then goes to the chest of drawers and brings from it a bottle and cloth. She wraps up the head of the baby, then goes to the cupboard, mixes something in a cup with water from the pitcher, comes back and gives it to the baby,* SQUANTO *and the* INDIAN WOMAN *watching every movement. The* INDIAN WOMAN *now prepares to lie down before the fireplace.*]

PATIENCE [*pointing to the* INDIAN WOMAN]. No, no, Squanto, she must go. You hear? She must go. The men will soon be here and she must not be seen or I will be punished. We have sickness enow. [*The* INDIAN WOMAN *points to her mouth with a motion of swallowing.* PATIENCE *shows terror. She comes forward, and speaks in an aside.*] I cannot show them that there is nothing, nothing in that bare cupboard. What shall I do? I cannot call—it will frighten Mistress Winslow. [*Aloud.*] She must go, Squanto—yes, she must. [*The* INDIAN WOMAN *keeps on her solicitation for food.* SQUANTO *looks quaintly at her.*]

PATIENCE [*whispering*]. She must not know of our distress, Squanto; she would tell the tribes hereabout. [*The* INDIAN WOMAN *lies down placing the papoose beside her.* SQUANTO *pushes her with his foot.*]

SQUANTO. Must go, must go, not here—there, there. [*He points to the door.*]

PATIENCE. Will she be angered if I put her out?

SQUANTO [*dubiously*]. Give her someting; anyting, but not eat. [PATIENCE *goes to the chest of drawers, or highboy, and hastily throws things about; she takes out a blue*

necklace and high comb and comes running back to center-front.]

PATIENCE [*aside*]. If the boys be dead, I'll never, never take off mourning, nor wear jewelry again. [*Aloud.*] Here, here, take this—and this. Now go. Oh, get her away, dear Squanto, please, before the men come in. [*The* INDIAN WOMAN *shows keen delight, putting the comb in her hair and hanging the chain on her own neck, then around the neck of the papoose. At last, very slowly, she wraps the baby up and goes out the door,* PATIENCE *throughout showing great anxiety.*]

PATIENCE [*turning to* SQUANTO *as he follows the* INDIAN WOMAN]. Oh, this is such a relief! How came you to bring her in here? How came you to do this? I thought you were our friend. She will spy on us!

SQUANTO [*moving to the door*]. She—Massasoit's wife.

PATIENCE [*terrified*]. What? What? Mas-sa-soit's wife? [SQUANTO *nods.*] Oh, Squanto, was she angry? [SQUANTO *keeps on nodding.* PATIENCE *reels and nearly falls, when confusion outside steadies her. The door opens, and* BRADFORD, BREWSTER, ALDEN *and other Pilgrims enter for the Council; also* MRS. BRADFORD, SILENCE, *and other women. As* BRADFORD *takes his seat at the head of the long table,* SQUANTO *slips out.*]

BRADFORD. Yes, it must be as I say. Call the women together, Silence. I have that of importance to announce. [SILENCE *brings* MRS. WINSLOW *from the inner room, then goes to the outer door, and a few more women come in.*]

BRADFORD. What, Susannah, art sick?

MRS. BRADFORD. Dear husband, it is only a sober silence coming from watching beside the sick. Thou art better, art thou not, Susannah? [BRADFORD *goes to the outer door, bolts it, then goes to the cupboard and takes a small bag therefrom. This he places on the table. He takes his seat again, and speaks in a clear, steady voice.*]

BRADFORD. I declare a fast this day—the anniversary of our landing on Plymouth shore. As it hath pleased high

Providence to show his love for us in the saving of our families to cheer our failing spirits; and in the feeding of our bodies through this year of sustaining grace; and in that we have been permitted in our some time distress to suck of the abundance of the seas, and the treasures hid in sands; and in that our men have been allowed to bring in deer and birds of the forest for great feasts, I now appoint a time of denial. [*He empties a bag of corn kernels on the tablecloth.*] We have here plenteous food for several days, and in thankfulness, and as a token of thanksgiving for our many mercies, seven grains will be distributed daily to each settler, counting man and woman and child alike, that our denial of the good fare of this land may be in earnest of our praise, and for better appreciation of the need of prosperity that must dawn if our fervor remains and we do not become despondent with the weight of our many sins. [*A long pause ensues as* BREWSTER, *with closed eyes and uplifted head, spreads his hands over the grains in benediction, all bowing their heads. The Council then rises, and various groups form about the stage.* BRADFORD, MRS. BRADFORD, *move to center-stage, front.*]

MRS. BRADFORD. William, have not Myles and his men been heard from yet?

BRADFORD. No, Alice, though they should be here by now—their time is overpast. We may hear of them any moment.

SILENCE [*coming forward to the center*]. But—but—maybe—maybe they be—not alive.

BREWSTER [*pats* SILENCE'S *head*]. My child, thou art yet struggling with sin.

SILENCE. Pastor, I am much disquiet because of them. Pray for me that I have a new heart. My mind has been taken up with vanities and follies; the remembrance of them—

PATIENCE [*coming up, shaking* SILENCE'S *arm*]. Do hush thy silly tongue! It is running away with thee again. See, they are sorting the grain! BRADFORD, MRS. BRADFORD *and*

ELDER BREWSTER *at the table count the apportionment of grain into little piles.*]

LOWE [*outside outer door and pounding on it*]. Quick, quick! Let me in! [*All are startled.* BREWSTER *unbolts the door, and* WILL LOWE *rushes in.*]

LOWE. The Indians! They are upon us! They are coming in great numbers. They are already on the road that passes by the spring. [*The men buckle up their belts and adjust their weapons or get their arms.* ALDEN *heads the formation.*]

BREWSTER. Describe them, Will Lowe.

LOWE. They are many, perhaps twenty or more, and a chief with mien like the great Massasoit.

BRADFORD. And Myles gone and half our sturdy men gone with him!

MRS. BRADFORD [*running to her husband, who clasps her to him*]. We have each other, William. I am not afraid. Come now, and command us. [PATIENCE, *thunderstruck at* LOWE'S *report, stands at the extreme left. Her head droops and she sinks to the floor.* SILENCE *runs to her in fear. She, too, crouches down.*]

MRS. WINSLOW. Oh, that we had not left Old England! These savages! This hunger! This cold! [*She stands by the inner door, right.*]

BREWSTER. Where is Squanto? [*All look around.*]

SILENCE [*shrilly*]. He has betrayed us! He has betrayed our want and need! And the Indians have come to destroy us all! [*The men consult together with hands on their guns.* PATIENCE *sobs;* SILENCE *settles on the floor beside her, in fear.*]

PATIENCE. O Silence, Silence, my heart is breaking.

MRS. BRADFORD [*coming forward to the group who stand about as if waiting for the first sounds of an attack*]. We have come here for the Lord's purpose. Our little lights, so feeble and starved and faint, shall yet gleam out into the night, a beacon for the distressed of nations, beckoning them to a home for the homeless, a refuge for the perse-

cuted. Lighted by our burning heart's love's glowing candle shall shine into a happy future— [*Her voice breaks, and she clings to her husband's arm.*] We still have each other, to live or die together—we must trust God for the rest, and wait—wait— [BREWSTER *bows his head, then raises his hands toward heaven.* THE BRADFORDS *stand with arms about each other, looking out and over the audience as if inspired and waiting. Men, women and children group in balanced proportion a little to the rear of the three central figures.* MRS. WINSLOW *and the Twins are right, by the inner door;* PATIENCE *and* SILENCE *on the floor, at left-stage.*]

[CURTAIN]

ACT III

Scene: Same as Act I.
Time: Christmas morning.

The rising of curtain discovers MRS. WINSLOW *at the cradle;* MRS. BRADFORD *reading the Bible;* PATIENCE *dejectedly sewing;* SILENCE *reading her stint, and wiping her eyes from time to time.* MRS. BREWSTER *comes from the inner room, with* WRESTLING.

SILENCE. And this is Christmas morning! No carols, no feast, no gifts,—naught but wailings over Jerusalem.

PATIENCE. No one is crying but yourself, Silence.

SILENCE. You would be, too, if the milk of human kindness was not frozen up in your breast. These verses of Isaiah set me wild.

MRS. BRADFORD. We can have Christmas in our hearts, dear Silence. We can think of what *is to be* and not what *is*. We are suffering, mayhap, but such is the stuff that martyrs are made of. Think of those two fearful days and nights just past, when we thought Squanto had betrayed

us, and waited hourly for death; and then of our joy when he came, and we found that he had not betrayed us but had been away, and that because of some deed of kindness—we know not even yet by whom nor how—all the Indians encamped about us were friendly. Is it not Christmas enough to know that they will perhaps smoke the pipe of peace with us if proper attention be given them on their visit to us this noon-meat—

SILENCE [*interrupting*]. Noon-meat! Good Mistress Bradford, you mistake—it is noon-starve.

MRS. BREWSTER. We still have corn, and the weather is clearing. Will Lowe brought in some bright berries this morning, of good flavor, and the trees are loaded with toothsome nuts.

SILENCE [*making a grimace*]. And I'll soon be without teeth if that is all we can get. [*A knock is heard at the outer door.* MRS. BREWSTER *opens it and* JOHN ALDEN *enters.*]

ALDEN [*coming forward*]. Get ready the room, good women. Chief Massasoit and his men will be soon here. Squanto has been sent before to interpret their purpose in coming here. Make good show and yield not one notion of our distress to them. They now come in peace, but a single act, or the knowledge that we have no food, may turn them to enmity. Keep silence and let no word of our shortness escape. [*Exit* ALDEN. RESTORE *and* RETURN *enter, as he goes out.*]

PATIENCE. Oh, these hateful old caps! I'll pull mine off to-night, for our season is over.

SILENCE. Thou art very wicked indeed, Patty. [*Very primly.*] I shall keep mine on until my sins are certain to be forgiven.

PATIENCE. Yes, yes, I forget. I have pledged myself to keep on my cap forever. [SILENCE *gasps.*] At any rate until we see our friends that we sent into banishment.

SILENCE. That may be very, very long, Patty—mayhap into eternity.

PATIENCE [*pulling her cap very hard over her ears*]. Then until eternity and beyond it—here shall rest my cap.

SILENCE [*whispering to* RETURN]. And she has the blithest curls of us all!

RETURN [*with a scornful twist of her lip*]. She is very blasphemous, though! [*The girls shrug their shoulders and make grimaces, moving to center-front. The women move about in preparation, showing great concern.*]

MRS. WINSLOW. Here, Patience, help me take in Peregrine. My little baby must not run the risk of being stolen for some red man's revenge. [*They carry the cradle into the inner room, then come out.*]

MRS. BREWSTER. Silence, where is that green rug of Winslow's? [SILENCE *takes it from the chest or cupboard.*] There! Put it at this end of the room. [*They place the rug at extreme left-stage.*] Now get cushions. Help me with the settle across here. Where are the bonny cloaks of the girls? Throw them over for a throne for the Indian king. Hurry, hurry! [*A beating of drums is now heard off-stage and the thin squeak of a fife. The sound draws nearer.* GOVERNOR BRADFORD *and his men march in;* BREWSTER *follows with an open Bible.* GOVERNOR BRADFORD *stands right of the door,* BREWSTER *stands left. Enter* SQUANTO, *as interpreter, followed by* CHIEF MASSASOIT, *and several braves in full dress, carrying bows and arrows.*]

ALDEN. Halt! Tisquantum, tell the chief that this house must be respected and the arms of his men removed and cast here. [*He points to the center of the stage.* SQUANTO *and the Chief consult. By this time,* MASSASOIT, *who keeps moving towards the left, has reached the rug, and not liking the interruption, tries to be seated. At a sign from* SQUANTO, *the braves come around the table and lay down their weapons. The girls and women stand at the extreme right, curious but brave.* MASSASOIT *sends* SQUANTO *out. Alarm is shown by the settlers.* BRADFORD *advances and holds out his hand.* MASSASOIT *lays his own across it.* INDIANS *now come back with* SQUANTO, *carrying bags, pelts, sheaves of corn, etc.*

MRS. BREWSTER. Heaven be praised! They are our friends. They bring us food. [*The* INDIANS *cast down their loads on the floor at right.*]

ALDEN. What does this mean, Squanto?

SQUANTO. Giff,—giff for white people. She—she [*Pointing to* PATIENCE.]—she good to Indian woman—she save lilly son for Massasoit. He show pleasure, good Alden. He bring giff—giff—food and maize, medicine leave, baccy, and oshyer and hooks and eels and nocake and samp. [*The Pilgrims show their joy and gratitude in various ways. They move more freely; some cross to left.*]

BRADFORD. Bring forth the loving-cup, Mistress Winslow. [MRS. WINSLOW *goes to the bracket and takes down the silver loving-cup. She carries it into the inner room and then brings it forth, steaming. She gives it to* BRADFORD, *who takes a sip, and passes it to* MASSASOIT *with great ceremony.* MASSASOIT *drains it to the last drop, smacks his lips and holds the cup out for more. The Pilgrims hide their merriment. The attendant now fills the calumet, and* MASSASOIT, *after a puff, passes it to* BRADFORD, *who passes it to the line of men, all in perfect silence. Thumping and stamping are heard without the door and* MYLES STANDISH *with his little company enter.* INCREASE *and* EMANUEL *carry a pole from which hangs a large turkey. The girls clasp their hands in fervent thankfulness.*]

STANDISH [*startled at the sight of the* INDIANS]. What means this, Bradford?

BRADFORD. Put up thy sword, Friend Standish. Massasoit constitutes himself our friend throughout his life. He seems to think we have done a favor for him—but I cannot recall what. Perhaps you know? [*As* STANDISH *shakes his head.*] It may be that Tisquantum has interpreted wrongly—but he is happy to make peace, and has brought our dear ones food and medicine.

STANDISH [*turning to* BREWSTER]. Do you mistrust him, Elder?

BREWSTER [*shaking his head*]. No. Come, Standish. [*He and* STANDISH *go to* MASSASOIT; *they extend hands*

and cover them. The colonists crowd about. Curiosity is shown about the wings, the head and the tail of the bird. The INDIANS *are all seated now, left-stage, about their chief.* STANDISH, BREWSTER, BRADFORD, *and other leaders stand near by.* PATIENCE *runs forward to* EMANUEL.]

PATIENCE. O Emanuel, it is my Christmas gift! [*Pointing to the turkey.*] It is mine, girls, all mine. He promised me.

MRS. BRADFORD [*clasping her hands*]. It is meat for days; it is our salvation!

SILENCE. Good boys—good boys! [*Running to* BREWSTER.] O dear Elder Brewster, forgive our boys who have come back to us. [*She clings to* BREWSTER'S *arm.*] I will never sin more. [*She then runs to* INCREASE.]

INCREASE. We have had perilous time, Silence. We often feared we would—I would—I mean—see you again, you know—I mean you, Silence. [RESTORE *and* RETURN *hug each other.*]

BRADFORD [*with* STANDISH, *leaving the Chief, and moving towards center-stage*]. Kind Standish, we have missed thee sorely. What news hast thou brought?

STANDISH. A long, strange, suffering tale, Governor, but good news withal. What think you of a fine beach across the bay, and a mountain, fair to see, and a most goodly harbor for settlement when this mother colony sends forth her new Pilgrims? A jagged peninsula runs down hill to the bay; three peaks pierce the air, summits on which to build beacon fires when in need or distress.

MRS. BRADFORD. Three-mounted! Tri-montaine, the French would say. Good dames and maidens, let us be made ware of the new town of Tri-montaine.*

SILENCE. Methinks it is a goodly name.

STANDISH. It shall be Tri-montaine, my little maid, if for no other reason than to honor the women of our colony. Let me hope, Silence, that you will grow in grace like the

* The first name of Boston, Massachusetts.

hoped-for settlement and neighbor. [*He pinches her cheek. An* INDIAN, *spoken to by* MASSASOIT, *here takes a bag from the pile, center-stage, and gives it to one of the Indian women, who goes with it into the inner room, followed by two more.*]

SQUANTO [*to* BRADFORD *and men who have gathered in a group, right*]. The Chief haf you know—all ting all wight. [*He shakes his head knowingly.*] Love peace—you—him—you—him—and all chillen—all time. Some sign—you say yes? Yes? [BRADFORD, STANDISH, BREWSTER, ALDEN, *with men, close in now left of stage,* SQUANTO *acting as a medium of talk between them and* MASSASOIT. *The young people work forward to right-center.*]

EMANUEL. Is he not a royal creature, Patty? [*He points to the turkey.*] He weighs as much as Wrestling. Here, Wrestling—[*He coaxes the child from his mother's skirts.*] let me heft you; now, this birds of the woods. Ah ha, a close balance. Increase shot him.

ALL. How? How? Increase, tell us about it. How? How?

INCREASE [*suiting all his words to action*]. Well, I crept up—slowly—slowly, and bang [*All jump; the girls cry out.*]. Well, I did not kill anything that shot, but fell into a drift of snow that almost covered me. [*Laughs.*] All the time along came the old gobbler up the slope with six other bonny shots, now and then stretching out his long red neck to watch, and spreading his wings and calling the hens. I kept still—watching, watching; then out came the sun and shone all over his back with bronze and green and gold and jewels. I aimed my blunderbuss, and shut my eyes, for he was a proud one to lay low, but bang! and over he toppled and beat the snow all around with his wings— Well, that is all. But, Silence, when he lay in the bottom of the dugout as we rowed back through the cakes of ice, with sleet cutting our hands, it seemed no glory when I thought of you girls praying for us, and if

we had not been getting closer and closer, and—and—and—

WRESTLING. Have you got my tree, Emanuel? Say, my tree, I want it too. [EMANUEL *pulls from his jacket a tiny spruce tree top. Then he takes from his pocket a bit of string and fastens it to the tree.* WRESTLING, *for the rest of the play, drags this around like a wagon, getting in the way and being scolded or pushed off.*]

SILENCE. And, Emanuel, what sort of a grand bird is this?—what is it called?

EMANUEL. Just bird, I should think.

PATIENCE. It should have a fine brave name for such a fine brave bird—or is it a chicken?

INCREASE. He can't crow—he just goes gobble—gobble—gobble. [*Imitating a turkey-gobbler. The Indian women now come back with great platters of popped corn, which they pour in a heap on the long table.*]

RETURN [*ecstatically*]. Oh, good mothers, what is this?—it is like snow. And can it be to eat?

SILENCE [*stealing a grain*]. Um-um-mm, it is good to eat. What can it be?

RESTORE. The Indian women brought it—what is it? Do let me taste.

MRS. BREWSTER. It is a new sort of maize which Massasoit would have us eat. Is it not wonderful?

PATIENCE. Such a feast, such a feast!

SILENCE [*aside to the boys*]. And after such a fast—such a fast! [*The girls tell in pantomime to the boys of the hard times they have endured.*]

BREWSTER. It is our thanksgiving feast.

PATIENCE. Rather, dear Elder, and Mother Brewster too, it is our Christmas feast—a love-feast of cheer and peace and glory and all that is good. [*Pointing to the home-folk, the spread, the sachem, the Indians and the turkey in turn.*] O dear Mother Brewster, how good everything is! How can we be anything but glad and joyous when our hearts are so full? Our lost returned, our houses

full again, the red man friendly, and the future promising help and protection!

MRS. BRADFORD. This is the earnest of our reward, as Paul hath declared, for our patience and longsuffering and our duty faced courageously day by day. Here we all are, bidden to the feast of Christmas—hearts and hands full, and with good-will to all men!

INCREASE [*stepping out in front*]. Let us have a song—a bonny song—a "hie there and ho there, let us be jolly" song. [*Grasps* SILENCE *by the hand and starts to twirl her about, but is restrained by* BREWSTER.]

BREWSTER. Refrain, my son, from being too hilarious. Remember our visitors. Rather let us sing a hymn. [*He pauses, hand on his chin, to remember some hymn.*]

SILENCE. Oh, no, no, no, no, dear Pastor! Let us have Patty make us a blithe rime about our great bird. Come, Patty, think hard, and say something about the Christmas Bird. [*She draws* PATIENCE *to the front.*]

PATIENCE [*drawing back*]. Dear Silence, don't! Have not I been punished enough? [*Cries of* "Patty," "Patience," "Give us a rime." *She pauses a moment or two, with eyes shut, then comes to the footlights and addresses the audience.*]

PATIENCE.

Let haughty Juno claim
The peacock proud of name,
For by it only can she prove her word;
But we, much prouder still,
Can future history fill
In honoring America's Own Bird.

Let earth and air around,
And sea and woods abound
With life that's feather'd, finn'd and furr'd;
We'll take from them the palm,
Of all things brave the balm,
And yield it to America's Own Bird.

And when each Christmas Day
Brings merry songs and play,
With gratefulness supreme our hearts be stirred;
On mem'ry's walls be 'graved
Of how the Day was saved
By "bringing in" America's Own Bird.

[CURTAIN]

In case this play should be incorporated into pageants or entertainments for other than Thanksgiving, Forefathers' Day or Christmas Day, the following lines may take the place of "America's Own Bird."

Sweet hope above—a taper light—
Has cheered us many a day,
And in the dark of many a night
Has glowed with heartening ray.

For Night is mother to the Morn,
And Winter to the Spring;
God's hand has held us up so far,
And greater help will bring.

Foe turned to friend has brought an end
To all our dreadful fears;
Our Faith, our Rock of Ages be,
Our stand till breaks eternity,
Our trust in future years.

The coming centuries will fling
About this time a haloed ring,
And memory and feast shall praise
The grit and pluck that made these days.

TABLEAU

Positions for Tableau at close of the play

Grouped Soldiers — Grouped Indians
Standish — Massasoit
Alden — Squanto
Elder Brewster — Gov. Bradford
Mrs. Brewster — Mrs. Bradford
Wrestling — Mrs. Winslow
Patience

Restore
Silence — Return
Increase — Emanuel

Right — *Center* — *Left*

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS *

A PAGEANT

By

ANNIE RUSSELL MARBLE

* Courtesy of Annie Russell Marble.

CHARACTERS

FIRST EPISODE

MAURICE, *son of William of Orange*
WILLIAM BRADFORD
WILLIAM BREWSTER
DUTCH SOLDIERS
GROUPS OF DUTCH MEN AND WOMEN WITH CHILDREN
FOUR ENGLISH BOYS
SYMBOLIC FIGURES OF FAITH, COURAGE, HOPE
JOHN ROBINSON, *the Pilgrim Pastor*
TEN OR TWELVE PILGRIM MEN AND WOMEN

SECOND EPISODE

TWELVE MEN led by MILES STANDISH
PRISCILLA MULLINS
MISTRESS ALLERTON
CONSTANCE HOPKINS
STEPHEN HOPKINS
JOHN HOWLAND
WILLIAM BRADFORD
GILES HOPKINS
OTHER PILGRIM WOMEN AND BOYS

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

This pageant is intended to commemorate in a simple way the coming of the Pilgrims from Holland and England to Plymouth in 1620 and their influence which may be traced in certain periods of our national history. The scenes are adapted for outdoors or any plain interior. The time required is from one hour and a half to two hours, according to the music introduced between the episodes.

FIRST EPISODE

The Embarkation

Place: Leyden before the departure of the Pilgrims for Delft Haven.
Time: July, 1620.

To strains of the Dutch National Hymn enter a gay company of Dutch men and women; the men have flags (orange, blue and white) and one of them has a bucket; others have steins; the women are knitting as they walk, and talking gayly; behind them comes a group of Dutch children, who skip in and dance portions of a Dutch Hornpipe or other folk-dance while their elders watch and talk.

While they are dancing enter Maurice, *son of William of Orange, in court dress attended by soldiers in Dutch uniforms. The men doff their hats, the women curtsey; when the dance ends some of the men fill their steins from the bucket and lifting them up, announce*

"the health" of PRINCE MAURICE; *all cheer and, gathering around the children, all sing the National Hymn (found in "Songs the Whole World Knows," and other collections).*

Who boasts of true Hollandish blood,
Whose heart abhors the wrong,
May join the goodly brotherhood,
May join our festive song;
Our manly voices let us raise,
And take him by the hand,
And sing the honor and the praise
Of our dear Father-land.

[*As they sing they wave their flags. Suddenly an English boy steps forward with the Union Jack of England raised in his hand; two of the Dutch boys push toward him with anger and are about to seize the English flag and to strike the boy when* MAURICE *interposes, raises his hand and the soldiers separate the boys. Meanwhile the Pilgrims enter.*]

MAURICE [*to* BREWSTER, BRADFORD *and the people*]. Nay, let not the lads ever provoke a quarrel between us two peoples. You English have lived amongst us now twelve years and yet we have had no suits or accusations against any of you. We are loth to have you depart from Leyden.

WILLIAM BREWSTER. Of a truth, this hath been a goodly and pleasant city and we have had much spiritual comfort among you. But we are pilgrims. Our grim mistress, Experience, has taught us many things for the future. We have a great hope and inward zeal of laying some foundation and advancing the gospel of Christ in the remote parts of America. And yet we may be but as stepping-stones unto others. [*As he speaks enter, to soft music of "My Faith Looks up to Thee," symbolic figures of* FAITH (*with white, flowing robe, gold chain and cross, and torch up-*

lifted high) ; COURAGE (*pressing forward in blue robe with helmet and shield*), *and* HOPE (*in green robe and carrying an anchor*). *All stand at the back and the Dutch maiden and children frolic about.*]

WILLIAM BRADFORD. Aye, our Elder Brewster is right. We leave you in Leyden with sorrow yet for weighty reasons. We would find an easier place for livelihood, we would ease the burdens of life for the aged—aye [*hesitating*], we would train our youths in English ways and speech.

WILLIAM BREWSTER [*as a band of ten pilgrims approaches*]. Before we leave for Delft Haven to embark upon our long voyage we would fain have a sweet service of prayer, with your permission, at this very place. Our pastor, John Robinson, goes not with us to the new shores but we will abide his coming with hopefulness.

MAURICE. Truly, ye are welcome to all the hospitality of our city and land. [*To the soldiers.*] Constrain yon merry crowd of youth and let us all be silent sharers in the farewell prayer and psalms of the pilgrims. [*The Dutch stand at either side and in the foreground* JOHN ROBINSON *and the Pilgrims form a Tableau, suggested by Charles Lucy's painting "The Departure from Delft Haven" (postcards of this and other paintings may be secured from A. S. Burbank, Plymouth, Mass.)* PASTOR ROBINSON *kneels upon a raised surface with both hands uplifted in prayer and the Pilgrims sit and kneel with bowed heads about him.* FAITH, COURAGE *and* HOPE *stand in the background. All join in "O God, My Strength and Fortitude." Sung as a recessional to tune of Hermann, written* 1554; *words by Thomas Sternhold.*]

O God, my strength and fortitude,
Of force I must love Thee;
Thou art my castle and defense
In my necessity.

My God, my rock, in whom I trust,
The worker of my wealth.
My refuge, buckler and my shield,
The horn of all my health!

He brought me forth to open place,
That so I might be free;
And kept me safe, because He had
A favor unto me.

SECOND EPISODE

Anchored off Cape Cod

Time: November, 1620.

With sounds of a drum, crudely beaten, enters a procession of twelve men with Miles Standish, *in armor and with a musket, leading; others have swords; two carry a large basket with ears of Indian corn; two others have Indian arrows in their arms; all walk wearily.*

At the left comes a group of women with clothes in a basket; boys and girls run beside them with bright autumn leaves in their hands. The girls have their gowns turned up; they wear capes and hoods. Some children are barefoot, carrying shoes in their hands. The two groups greet each other soberly and the children examine the arrows and corn.

Priscilla Mullins. Of a truth, this is a day of rejoicing for your safe return from your weary search, and it's a glad day for us women also; we have washed our clothes in pools of clear water. Great need of such washing there was, too, after our life in yonder prison ship for sixty-six days. We have slept on musty beds and lived in sodden clothes. But now, we are shivering from the cold water

through which we were forced to wade. My brother, Joseph, and John Crackston are exhausted and near to faintness. [*She bends above one of the young men who has lain down on the ground.*]

MISTRESS ALLERTON [*pushing* PRISCILLA *aside*]. Hist, Priscilla! Talk not so much; it is not seemly in a maiden. These men will help Joseph back to the *Mayflower*. But how fare you, Captain Standish and your men? My own goodman, Isaac Allerton, seems weary. Saw you savages? Have you found place for our settlement?

MILES STANDISH. Nay, Mistress Allerton, we must search further for wood and springs and fertile land. Happily, we escaped serious trouble with the savages—we saw five or six of them prowling about and we heard their wild whoops during one night. [*The women shiver while the boys are excited and point arrows at each other.*]

JOHN HOWLAND. 'Twas the Captain's muskets and his cool courage, as well as the sight of his armor, that scared the Indians away after they had shot a few arrows at us.

STEPHEN HOPKINS [*showing the corn*]. We found some corn for seed in a camp of Indians that had been abandoned; we will plant the corn in the spring but the arrows we will send back to England as the first trophies from our merchant adventurers.

WILLIAM BRADFORD [*to the women*]. And how are affairs on the ship? Is there orderliness among the crew and others since our good Governor Carver read the compact which we signed in the cabin of yon ship? It were well for all to know that we will tolerate no rebels old or young, that law and order and submission— [GILES HOPKINS, *a lad, comes rushing toward his father.*]

GILES HOPKINS. Hurry! Hurry, father and you, Captain Standish. Haste to the ship, for John Billington has found some powder in his father's chest and set fire to part of it; the flames are put out but there is smoke still and Mistress Rose Standish has swooned from fright.

MILES STANDISH [*hurrying away followed by the men*

and women, all talking and shaking their heads]. John Billington, the young rascal; he should be soundly whipped.

CONSTANCE HOPKINS [*a young maiden running in excitement to meet the women, and beckoning to them*]. Come quickly; for we have *two* babies now on the *Mayflower*. My little brother, Oceanus, has a mate for Mistress Susanna White has borne a son—

WILLIAM BRADFORD. Of a truth, his name shall be Peregrine; for such he is—a traveler to a strange land. [*All the characters go out as the song, "Landing of the Pilgrims," words by Mrs. Felicia Hemans, music by Miss Brown (Ditson) is sung by a mixed quartette or chorus:*]

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;
And the heavy night hung dark,
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

[*Enter* FAITH, COURAGE *and* HOPE *forming a tableau;* COURAGE *and* HOPE *kneeling on either side of* FAITH, *with uplifted torch.*]

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!
Aye, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod!
They have left unstained what there they found—
Freedom to worship God.

THIRD EPISODE

Hope Triumphant Over Fear

Time: Plymouth, March, 1621.

Symbolic figures of Disease, Death *and* Poverty *enter with sad faces and drooping figures, all clad in dark capes.* Death *has a sickle;* Poverty *is in rags, holding out empty hands. Behind them comes* Mercury, *a lad in green doublet and hose with winged hat and shoes, carrying a caduceus (stick wound with imitation serpents). He drives away the figures of* Death, Poverty *and* Disease; *with frightened looks they shudder and pass as enter* Faith, Courage *and* Hope. *In the distance are sung the last stanzas of Whittier's "A Dream of Summer," in Riverside Song Book (Houghton Mifflin & Co.):*

So, in these winters of the soul,
By bitter blasts and drear,
O'er swept from Memory's frozen pole,
Will sunny days appear.
Reviving Hope and Faith they show
The soul its living powers,
And how beneath the winter's snow
Lie germs of summer flowers.

The Night is Mother of the Day,
The Winter of the Spring,
And ever upon old Decay
The greenest mosses cling.
Behind the cloud the star-light lurks,
Thro' showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all His works
Has left His hope with all.

[*Three young girls, from 14 to 20 years of age, come in*

and seat themselves upon an imitation or a real rock; they have clothes in wooden trenchers.]

PRISCILLA MULLINS. Isn't it good to feel this warm sun on our backs and on our clothes that we have washed in the brook! I heard the robins singing this morning.

MARY CHILTON. Oh, Priscilla, how can you be so cheerful when we think of all our losses this sad winter—on yonder hillside are buried [*almost in tears*] fathers and mothers—I feel so hopeless, for the sick need food and we have nothing for dainty dishes—

JOHN ALDEN [*coming forward with a wild duck in one hand and a bunch of pussy willows in the other*]. Here, Mistress Mary Chilton, is some food that will make good broth for the sick; and here, Priscilla, are some tokens of spring that will gladden your heart [*He gives her pussy willows and sits beside her.*] though I doubt if it needs more cheer and faith than you already have. You give hope to all the settlement with your courage.

PRISCILLA [*rising and making a mock curtsey*]. Thanks, Master Alden. You are gallant indeed. Did you get training at French or English courts? [*As* ALDEN *looks down, troubled.*] Nay, I mean not to be so pert. I thank you. 'Tis not easy to keep good cheer with all of one's family buried under the sod—yet—the willows tell us that spring is here and soon there will be flowers.

ELIZABETH TILLEY. The boys say that the wolves howled last night. Francis Billington saw from the top of the hill a smaller sea and, he thought, he caught glimpses of some Indians. Do you think, John Alden, they will come upon us now that the snow has melted? [*Sounds of a drum are heard and* GILES HOPKINS *appears in great excitement.*]

GILES HOPKINS. What do you think has happened? Look up on that hill! There's a savage coming and who knows but there are hundreds more behind him. Captain Standish and four of the men are getting their swords and side-arms ready and will meet him at the brook. [*The girls arise in fear as* STANDISH *and others come in.* JOHN

ALDEN *joins the men.* SAMOSET *enters, with bow and arrows, a skin about his body.*]

SAMOSET [*with a wide smile*]. Welcome, Englishmen!

WILLIAM BRADFORD. Look well to your side-arms, men! He may mean mischief.

PRISCILLA [*supporting* ELIZABETH TILLEY, *who is trembling*]. But he *looks* so friendly and he speaks English.

SAMOSET. Me Samoset—me great chief of Mohegans—way there [*pointing north*]. Me like English—me bring Squanto, he know more; he last of tribe—Patuxets—they live here; all die of great plague.

WILLIAM BRADFORD. What say you? A plague killed the Indians?

SAMOSET [*bowing and gesticulating*]. Two year, many moons; big plague, he, Squanto tell. He ask Samoset come first. One of you men come to Massasoit, big chief, stay there; he come here to make peace with white men.

CAPTAIN STANDISH [*with disdain*]. Asking a hostage, indeed! To be dictated to by a savage!

EDWARD WINSLOW [*coming forward in protest to* STANDISH]. It is but fitting, I think, that the savages should ask us to treat with them. It is friendly. I will gladly go with this Indian as a hostage to his chief. Let us take him now to Governor Carver.

WILLIAM BRADFORD. We will lodge him at Stephen Hopkins' for the night and watch him. [*The men and children pass with* SAMOSET, *who gives a strange laugh.*]

JOHN ALDEN. Look you, Priscilla, keep the maidens from fear and cook some savory dish for this Indian when you make broth for the sick. There is no cause for alarm. Our captain has a strong right arm.

PRISCILLA [*to* MARY CHILTON]. And the savage has a fearsome leer. Yet he is not bent on mischief now. Shall we bait his heart with sea-biscuits and a drink of English brew? I doubt not he would rather eat his fowl uncooked than made into a "savory dish" as John Alden suggests. Well, the settlement has had its first distinguished visitor!

FOURTH EPISODE

Scenes of Thanksgiving

Time: November, 1623.

In the distance is heard the "Harvest Song" to the tune Leipsic (Mendelssohn):

Sing to the Lord of harvest,
Sing songs of love and praise;
With joyful hearts and voices
Your alleluias raise:
By Him the rolling seasons
In fruitful order move;
Sing to the Lord of harvest
A song of happy love.

By Him the clouds drop fatness,
The deserts bloom and spring,
The hills leap up in gladness,
The valleys laugh and sing:
He filleth with His fullness
All things with large increase,
He crowns the year with goodness,
With plenty and with peace.

[*The Pilgrims are seen on their knees, with folded hands, while* Elder Brewster *raises his hands in blessing. Stacks of corn and dried apples are hanging in the background. At one side are six or eight Indians in full array watching with strange looks and guttural sounds, the Pilgrims.*]

Elder Brewster [*as the people rise*]. And now, as we have feasted and had a prayer of thanksgiving for the bounties of the harvest and for peace with the Indians, we will sing for these our guests one of our hymns. [*All sing,*

"By the waters of Babylon, we sat down and wept," found in old hymn-books.]

SQUANTO [*coming forward*]. We thank for good feed—good meat, good drink—we sing now for you and dance. [*The Pilgrims look shocked. Indians, at his signal, come with their tom-toms and beginning slowly, they increase their action into typical Indian dance—moon dance or other selection. The Pilgrim women cover their faces with their capes or aprons; the children are gleeful and try to imitate the Indian steps but are stopped by the Pilgrims.*]

GOVERNOR BRADFORD. These heathen ways are strange to our eyes and ears; but we may be instruments to bring the savages to a higher knowledge of God. We should be thankful that they are friendly to us; we are grateful, also, for the good services of Edward Winslow in our behalf among them. Massasoit esteems him most highly since Winslow cured him of the fever by simple remedies and broth—

PRISCILLA [*with a laugh*]. Aye, strained through his handkerchief— [*The matrons shake their heads at her in reproof.*]

EDWARD WINSLOW [*coming forward with* MISTRESS SUSANNA WHITE WINSLOW *on his arm*]. We are grateful, also, Governor, for the courage and skill of our good captain and I think we owe much to my good dame and the other women of our Plymouth colony who have provided us with the feast and who have sustained us here by their steadfastness and fidelity. [*The women look pleased but embarrassed; some try to curtsy.*]

ELDER BREWSTER. Before we separate let us sing the Hymn of thanks and praise. [*All sing "Doxology" (1551). All pass out as* GILES HOPKINS *beats his drum; the Indians follow with strange sounds and occasional use of the tom-toms. The Pageant may end here if only Pilgrim scenes are desired.*]

PART II. UNSEEN HARVESTS

FIRST EPISODE

Law and Liberty

Music, "Faith of Our Fathers" (words by Faber; music by Herts and Walton; St. Catherine). To the strains enter Processional of Faith, Courage, Hope, *followed by* Law *and* Liberty *(the former in robe and wig; the latter with helmet and shield, a chain is in one hand and a slave crouching beside him). They group at the side of stage. Enters a small group of soldiers in Continental uniforms who march to strains of Timothy Dwight's "Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise." One of the soldiers reads the "Declaration of Independence."*

A group of sailors of 1812 with the flag of eighteen stars, enter to music of "The Star Spangled Banner" which all sing.

These are followed by a small group in the uniform of Civil War Veterans. All sing the first and last stanzas of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." As this is being sung Liberty *cuts, with his sword, the chain of the slave; the latter rises and stands. Repeating the refrain of the Hymn all pass as recessional.*

SECOND EPISODE

Fighting for Humanity

To the strains of "Columbia" or "The Red, White and Blue" enter, with the flag of the United States, a group of soldiers in khaki, some marines and sailors, and four Red Cross nurses. Liberty *stands in the*

background, with uplifted sword. Beside her are women and children in Belgian and French costumes, appealing to her. All sing the second stanza of "Columbia":

The star-spangled banner bring hither,
O'er Columbia's true sons let it wave;
May the wreaths they have won never wither,
Nor its stars cease to shine on the brave;
May thy service, united, ne'er sever,
But hold to their colors so true;
The army and navy forever,
Three cheers for the red, white and blue.

CHORUS

Three cheers for the red, white and blue,
Three cheers for the red, white and blue,
The army and navy forever,
Three cheers for the red, white and blue.

[*At the close of the song a troop of Boy Scouts, and a group of girls and young women, some knitting, others with racks full of canned goods, enter. They sing one stanza of "Keep the Home Fires Burning." One of the soldiers comes forward, and while all form a close group, he recites two stanzas of "The New Crusade" by Katherine Lee Bates ("The Retinue" and other Poems: Dutton).*]

Life is a trifle;
Honor is all;
Shoulder the rifle,
Answer the call.
A nation of traders,
We'll show what we are,
Freedom's crusaders
Who war against war.

Gladly we barter
Gold of our youth
For Liberty's charter
Blood-sealed in truth.
A nation of traders!
We'll show what we are,
Freedom's crusaders
Who war against war.

[*To the music of "America, the Beautiful"* (*words by Miss Bates and tune Materna*) *the groups pass singing the first and last stanzas.*]

THIRD EPISODE

Morality and Education

To the music of "Faith of Our Fathers" (*St. Catherine*) *enter* Morality *and* Education *leading two children.* Morality, *in long, flowing robes of blue, has a large Bible;* Education, *in orange, has a scroll unrolled in her hand. Other children with school banners and college students in caps and gowns with college pennants follow. They all sing three stanzas of "Faith of Our Fathers," standing in front of* Morality *and* Education; *the latter are placed upon a slightly raised platform which has a higher step in the center.*

Faith of our Fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword,
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our Fathers, holy Faith,
We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our Fathers, we will strive
To win all nations unto thee;

And through the truth that comes from God
Mankind shall then indeed be free;
Faith of our Fathers, holy Faith,
We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our Fathers, we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife,
And preach thee too as Love knows how
By kindly word and virtuous life;
Faith of our Fathers, holy Faith,
We will be true to thee till death.

[*During the singing* FAITH, COURAGE, HOPE, LAW *and* LIBERTY *enter and stand in the background.* HOSPITALITY *enters slowly with a large pineapple (symbol). Behind her come groups of men, women and children in foreign dress with flags of their nations. (These will vary with the races most prominent in each community.) They are followed by* BRADFORD, BREWSTER, STANDISH *and other Pilgrims who form a group at one side.*

COLUMBIA, *dressed in red, white and blue, with a wreath on her head and carrying a large American flag stands upon the step above all the groups. The children now come to the front and dance two folk-dances, Italian, Swedish or other, according to the nationalities represented.*

At the close of the dance, HOSPITALITY *comes forward and speaks to the various nationalities as they crowd about her.*]

HOSPITALITY. We greet you for all the good you have brought to our shores in America. You have given us much that is good in law, art, music, literature and religion. We greet you as brothers and sisters, sharing with us the gifts of Columbia [*pointing to her*]. We are of many races and different languages but we all aspire to make of these United States one great Union of good for the world. [Co-

LUMBIA, *holding aloft her flag, recites a portion of "The Ship of State" (Longfellow)*:]

Sail on, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union strong and great;
Humanity with all its fears,
With all its hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate.
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, sail on, O Ship of State.

[*They all stand for a moment, then making place for the figures of the Pilgrims at the very front, all in the Episode sing "The Mayflower Still Is Sailing On," poem by Rev. Allen Eastman Cross (with permission) sung to the tune "Duke Street"*:]

More light shall break from out Thy Word
For Pilgrim followers of the Gleam,
Till led by Thy free spirit, Lord,
We see and share the Pilgrim dream!

What mighty hopes are in our care,
What holy dreams of Brotherhood;
God of our Fathers, help us dare
Their passion for the Common Good!

Wild roars the blast, the storm is high!
Above the storm are shining still
The lights by which we live and die;
Our peace is ever in Thy will!

The ancient stars, the ancient faith,
  Defend us till our voyage is done—
Across the fields of fear and death
  The *Mayflower* still is sailing on.

[*To strains of "The Washington Post" all the groups pass in recessional, the Pilgrims following* COLUMBIA *and the other symbolic figures; the rest of the characters falling into line and marching.*]